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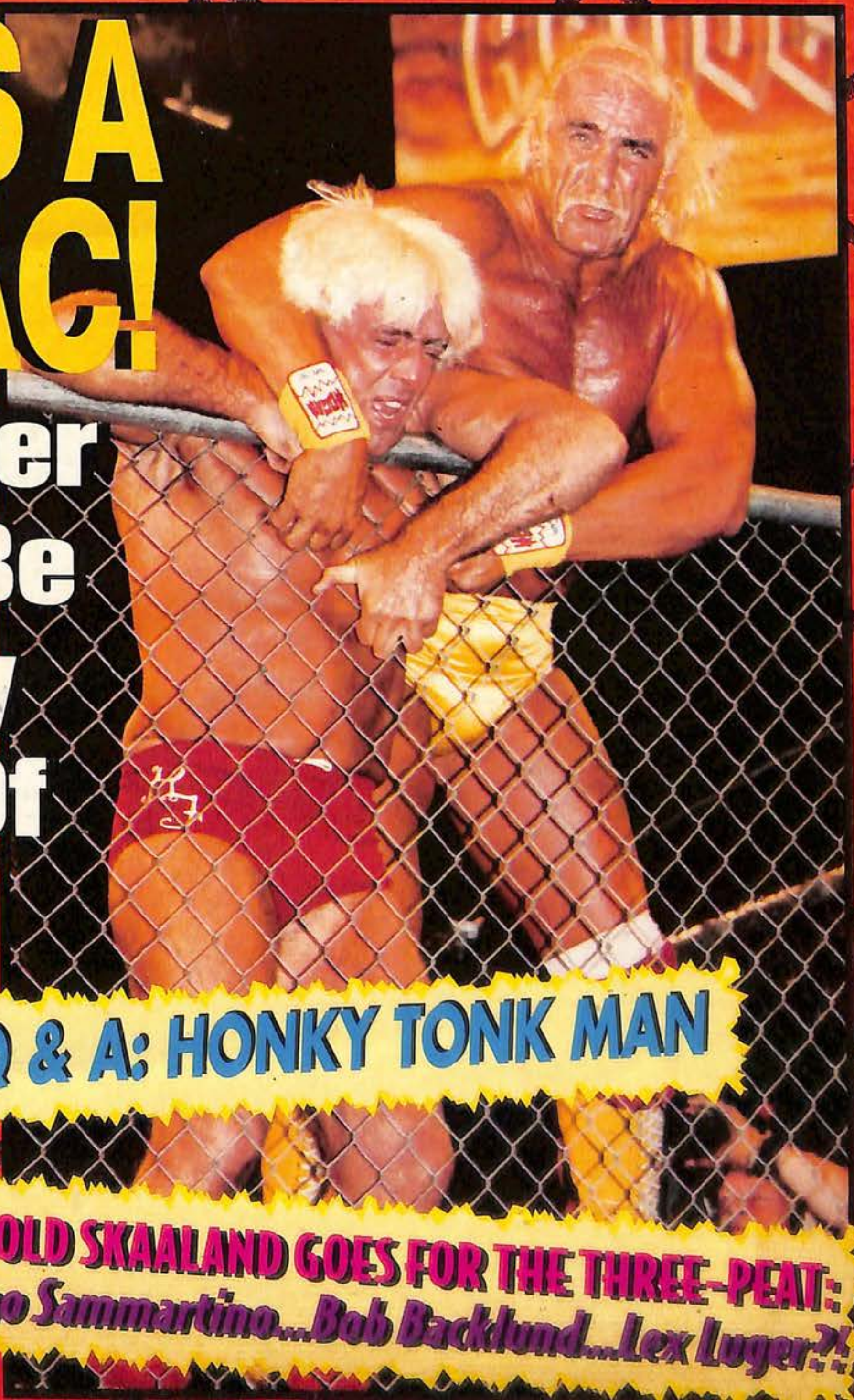

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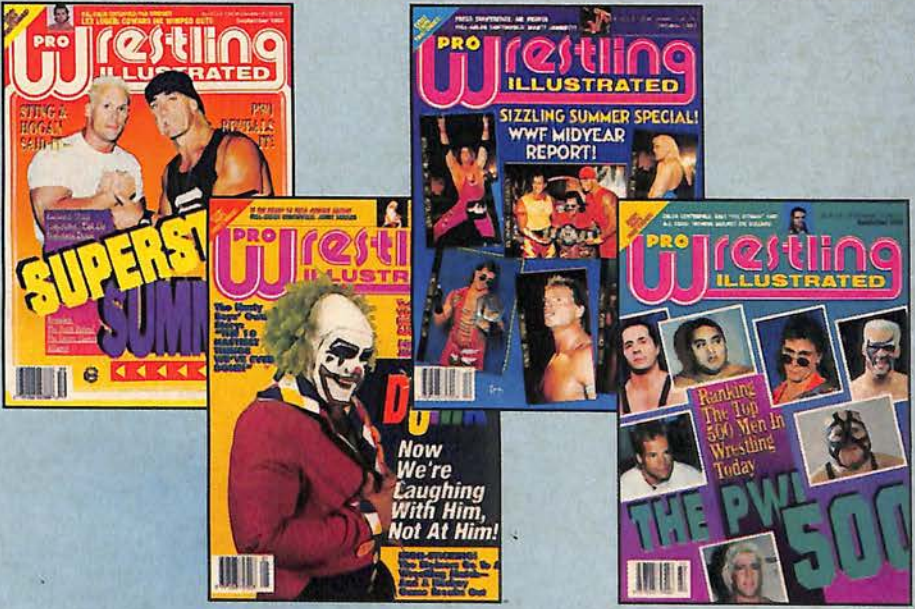

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THE Wrestler

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YOUR LETTERS

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RESPECT FOR "THE DRAGON"

As a lifelong fan of rulebreakers, I hate to admit this, but I respect and actually admire Rick "The Dragon" Steamboat. Here's a man who has done it all in wrestling. He has won almost every title there is without ever breaking the rules.

Steamboat really earned my respect back in 1989 when he defeated Ric Flair for the NWA World title. I agree with what Flair once said: "Steamboat would have won a lot more titles if he hadn't taken those 'retirements.' "

I'll always be a fan of rulebreakers, but Steamboat is one of a kind, and I'm also a fan of his. He's right up there with the all-time greats, and it'll be a sad day for wrestling when Rick retires for good.

Keep breathing that fire, Steamboat, you're a class act.

JOHN TEEMAN
Kalamazoo, MI

Rick Steamboat has won the respect of reader John Teeman, a man who has never liked fan favorites. He admires "The Dragon" because he has won so many titles without breaking the rules and hopes Steamboat doesn't retire soon.

***ADIEU*, FLAIR!**

I cannot believe that "Nature Boy" Ric Flair's career ended in such a distasteful manner. Flair is one of the greatest wrestlers to ever strut into the ring. His arrogance and rulebreaking aside, Flair was a scientific and tactical genius who could outmaneuver *anyone*. His loss to Hulk Hogan in a cage match did nothing to showcase his abilities. The match was bogus, especially with Mr. T as the guest referee. Mr. T's presence only sickened true wrestling fans.

At the end of the match, something should have been said about Flair's wonderful career, or he should have been given one last hurrah from his fans as well as his enemies. He should have gotten more than just Hogan prancing around the ring like a trained monkey, posing like a dog doing tricks for a treat. Flair deserved better than that; his legacy will live on forever in the hearts of his true fans!

GENE STREMBA
St. Louis, MO

FOUNDERING SOLUTION

I agree with Eddie Ellner's analysis of Lex Luger ("Why Luger Turning Bad Would Be Good For The WWF," December 1994). Luger has been foundering in the WWF since his arrival almost two years ago. He hasn't lived up to a fraction of his potential. Lex needs to regain the intense fighting spirit he had in WCW. As a rulebreaker, he would also receive more title shots in the WWF. With the proper attitude, I think Luger could still win the World title.

MIKE FACCIANI
Johnstown, PA

VICIOUS FALL FROM GRACE

Sid Vicious will self-destruct before reclaiming superstardom, as you suggested in your December issue ("A Vicious Cycle: Will Sid Self-Destruct Before Re-claiming Superstardom?"). If Sid wasn't all body and brute with no brain, he could be WWF or WCW champion today! Although he is the USWA heavyweight champion, that won't last. In fact, I think he should be stripped of the title. Sid is too dumb to realize when something is going good for him. He is just too brutal—not only as a wrestler, but as a person. He must stop acting like some bully and control his temper. If he does this, Sid could rule the wrestling world as he always wanted to.

Sid, turn over a new leaf, but I don't mean turn into a wimp. Just stay within the rules! The sport and the fans need you. Please consider this advice.

FELIX RODRIGUEZ
Ridgewood, NY

(Continued on page 54)

Lex Luger would be much better off as a rulebreaker, says reader Mike Facciani. He thinks Luger would get more title shots if he turned bad and could finally get out of his rut.

Sid Vicious must learn to control his temper and become a smarter wrestler if he really wants to become a superstar. That's the opinion of reader Felix Rodriguez, who says Sid should consider turning fan favorite again.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

By Bill Apter

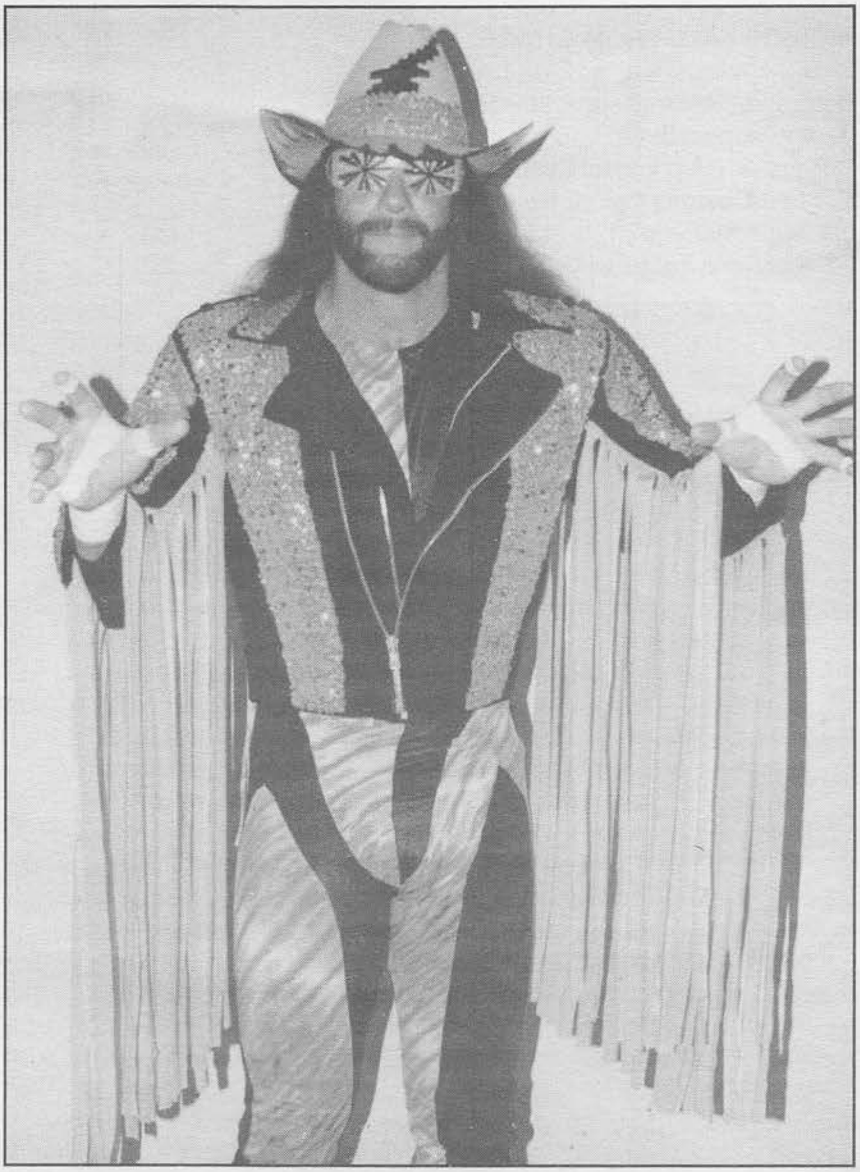
DO YOU REMEMBER how shocked everyone was when **Hulk Hogan** left the WWF after 10 spectacular years with the promotion? We were all even more stunned when he signed with WCW. Yet another WWF superstar could be on his way to Atlanta, as WWF head **Vince McMahon** announced on *Monday Night Raw* that **Randy Savage** could not come to terms on a new contract with the WWF.

McMahon said he was the "Macho Man's" number-one fan, thanked him for all he has done for the WWF over the years, and wished him the best in the future.

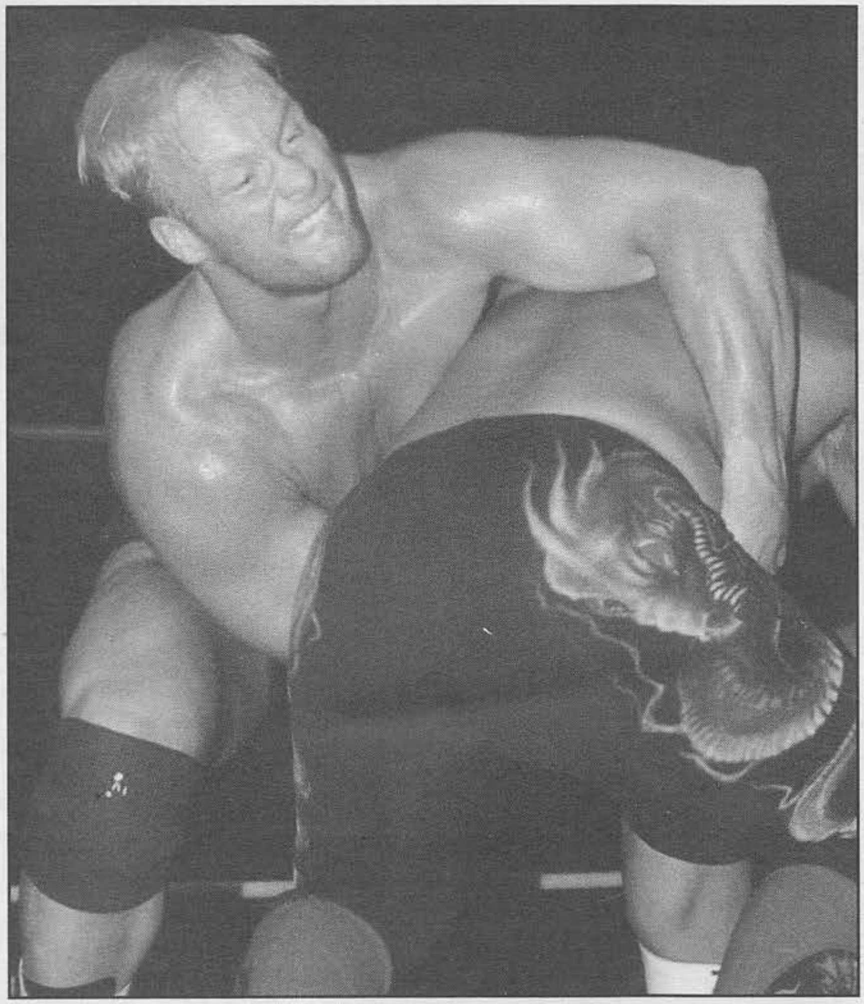
The rumors are flying. People are saying Savage is headed to WCW. If he does, will he form an alliance with Hogan or perhaps join **Brutus Beefcake**, **Kevin Sullivan**, and **Avalanche** (formerly **Earthquake**) in **The Three (Four?) Faces of Fear** and fight against him?

The "Hulkster" and the "Macho Man" have been both the best of friends and most bitter of enemies in the past, so either is possible. As of now, no one even knows for sure if Savage is headed to WCW, but I'll tell you this: We haven't seen the last of Randy Savage in a wrestling ring.

If I were Hogan, however, I wouldn't worry about Savage yet. I'd be focused on Beefcake, Sullivan, and Avalanche. All three



Randy Savage is out of the WWF. WWF head Vince McMahon announced that the "Macho Man" could not agree on a new contract; rumor has it that he will sign with WCW and possibly go after Hulk Hogan and the World title.



Steve Austin would probably like to forget the fall of 1994. He lost the U.S. title to Hacksaw Duggan and has been unable to regain it in subsequent rematches. "Stunning" Steve is now being managed by Sherri Martel.

attacked him after he beat **Ric Flair** in a retirement match at Halloween Havoc. Good thing for Hogan he has **Sting** and **Dave Sullivan** on his side. By the way, I think we're all still wondering when Hogan will finally square off against **Big Van Vader**.

With Flair retired, you might be wondering if **Sherri Martel** is now out of a job. Not a chance! She was very loyal to the "Nature Boy," but she has a new man she is watching out for now: **Steve Austin**. I guess she sees a lot of similarities between "Stunning" Steve and Flair.

Martel and Austin won't be together only in WCW, though. It was announced just before press time that Austin was headed to ECW to wrestle a few matches, at least one of which with heavyweight champ **Shane Douglas** as his tag team partner.

Sherri, as you will recall, used to manage Douglas in ECW. In the last few months, Douglas had been very critical of both Flair and Hogan, saying they were a couple of washed-up old men. He also ripped Sherri for managing Flair.

Maybe Austin could use a change of scenery. When he lost the WCW U.S. title to **Hacksaw Duggan** in 27 seconds at Fall Brawl, most experts said he would need only one rematch to regain it. Austin is good, but maybe not that good. He has resorted to using foreign objects in many of their rematches, but Duggan still has the belt. They wrestled again at Halloween Havoc, but Austin was so frustrated by Hacksaw that he threw him over the top rope and was disqualified.

Paul Roma and **Paul Orndorff** regained the WCW World tag team title from **Marcus Bagwell** and **The Patriot** at Halloween Havoc, but you have to wonder how long they will stay on top. Since recapturing the belts, they lost several non-title matches to

(Continued on page 52)

STEVE ANDERSON'S VIEW

NO HOLDS BARRED

with David Rosenbaum

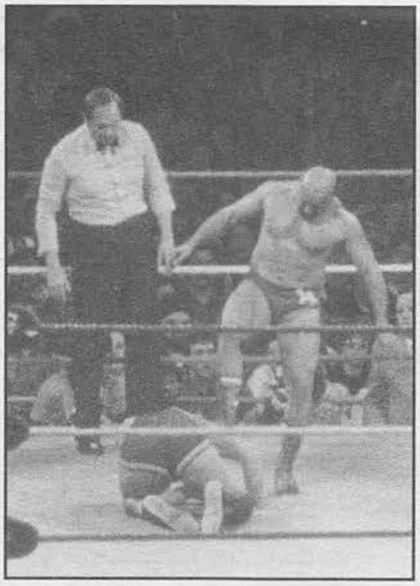
THINGS ARE CHANGING too quickly in wrestling these days. Ric Flair retired, Hacksaw Duggan is WCW U.S. champ, Bob Backlund is no longer wrestling as a fan favorite, and Brutus Beefcake is once again wrestling as a rulebreaker.

Seems like a good time to play one of my favorite games: news item, gut reaction, informed reaction.

NEWS ITEM: Bob Backlund attacks former manager Arnold Skaaland, claiming Skaaland shouldn't have thrown in the towel, an action that cost Backlund the WWF World title in a match against The Iron Sheik in 1983. Looking angry and sounding bitter, Backlund shocked the world with his vicious attack and is now the most hated figure in the WWF.

GUT REACTION: Backlund-Sheik occurred in 1983. Why did he wait 11 years to attack Skaaland? Backlund was one of the most hated *fan favorites* in the WWF, so what's the difference now?

INFORMED REACTION: Desperate men do desperate things and Bob Backlund is the most desperate of all: A man who spent his entire life doing one thing, can't do anything but that one thing, and now realizes—much to his horror—that he can't do that one thing anymore. Having been a fool with his money, and unqualified to do anything but wrestle or coach wrestling, Backlund resorted to desperate measures and made himself look like an even bigger fool. By doing so, he also wiped out any good memories people had of him as one of the finest scientific wrestlers of the late-'70s, early-'80s. I have no doubt that Backlund vs. Hogan would have been an epic match in 1984, if only the WWF had let it happen.



Bob Backlund's bitterness toward Arnold Skaaland goes back to 1983, when, he says, Skaaland cost him the WWF title. Backlund's recent attack on Skaaland showed he was a desperate man—a man who deserves no pity.

Years later, however, people have forgotten about Backlund and for good reason. He failed to keep up with the times. The great scientific wrestlers of the 1990s can mix in some brawling techniques when needed. Pure scientific wrestlers such as Backlund have as much place in the sport as a one-handed set-shooter would in the NBA.

But show no pity for Backlund, who disqualified himself from pity with his attack on Skaaland. Vince McMahon was outraged and, for the first time I can remember, I share his outrage. Backlund is a bigger fool than ever.

***

NEWS ITEM: With The Sandman's departure, Woman picks a new man.

GUT REACTION: Pick me!

INFORMED REACTION: Pick me! And athletes shouldn't smoke on TV, Sandman.

***

NEWS ITEM: Brutus Beefcake turns bad. A masked man attacks Hulk Hogan from behind at Halloween Havoc. Hogan grabs the man and unmasks him. It turns out to be his lifelong friend. "The Barber" is now "The Butcher."

(Continued on page 50)

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BLINDSIDED

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

IS DAVE SULLIVAN a simpleton? Let's put it this way: He makes Rick Steiner look like Stephen Hawking.

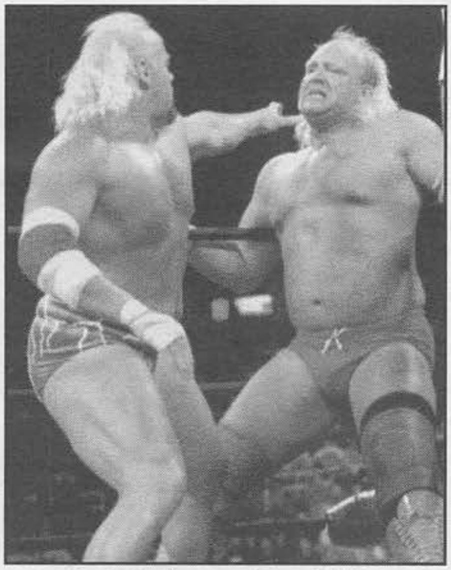
Dave's older brother, Kevin Sullivan, can't stand it. Sullivan is one of the sport's most dangerous men, but he's also one of its most intelligent. He says sometimes he can't believe he and Dave are from the same family.

What *really* annoys the elder Sullivan, however, is the fact that his little brother is a big Hulk Hogan fan. One of the biggest. So big that Dave calls himself "The Ultimate Hulkamaniac." Dave has a pair of Hogan's boots, given to him by the "Hulkster" himself. Dave calls the boots his "magic slippers."

Like most rulebreakers, Kevin Sullivan hates Hulk Hogan. He despises everything Hogan represents. So when his brother went public with his love for Hulkamania, Kevin exercised what for him was the only logical option.

He started a feud with his own flesh and blood.

That feud reached a dramatic high point when the Sullivans squared off against each other at Halloween Havoc. Kevin went in with a scowl on his face. Dave went in with a silly grin...and left with a countout victory. Kevin was so ticked off, he interfered in Hogan's match with Ric Flair.



Kevin Sullivan vs. Dave Sullivan

Now as far as brother feuds go, Sullivan vs. Sullivan doesn't match the intensity of Bret Hart vs. Owen Hart. For one thing, Dave isn't much of a wrestler. If Kevin taught him, he didn't teach him much.

What this feud does do is add some flavor to the WCW stew. For Kevin Sullivan, it's a little too spicy; but for Dave, the taste is just right.

"Kevin's jealous, 'cause I'm better than he is!" said Dave, not too convincingly, but earnestly. "For a lot of years, he tried to hold me down. Too bad for him it didn't work!"

"I should have other, more important concerns," countered Kevin, "but I have to deal with this. So be it. David is a mere nuisance, a problem to be solved. He may have gotten lucky at Halloween Havoc, but I know I eventually will work my will."

The older brother is confident, but Dave has a powerful advantage: His good buddy is the WCW World champion.

"Dave is a brave dude," Hogan said. "He's going against his brother for the sake of all the little Hulkamaniacs. I know Dave can fight his own battles, but I'll gladly help him out whenever I get the chance. That's a warning to Kevin Sullivan, too. When he tried to take my belt away from me, he gave me even more incentive to make him look bad."

Most likely, Hogan's involvement will be minimal. It will be brother vs. brother all the way. That's good enough for Kevin, of course, but Dave seems to be counting on a little more help.

"Yeah, Hulk will be here anytime I call him," Dave insisted. "Anytime at all. Just you watch. All I gotta do is pick up the phone and 'Hulkster' will be right here with me. I could do it right now. Want me to?"

"The simp!" Kevin exclaimed with a laugh. "He actually believes Hulk Hogan is at his beck and call! Doesn't that give you some indication of the way his mind works? What a complete fool! Didn't I tell you I had nothing to worry about? I expect to settle this matter very soon."

In his zeal to capitalize on his younger brother's naivete, Kevin Sullivan is forgetting that although Hogan may not always be watching, he has plenty of friends in WCW who will gladly fill in for him.

Maybe Dave is smarter than we thought.

Okay, maybe not. □

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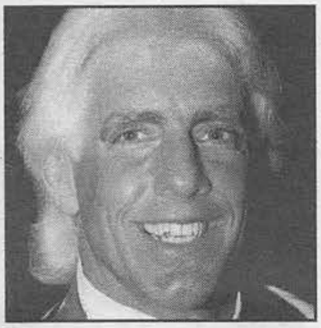
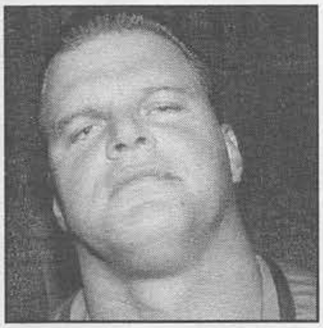
Thumbs Up

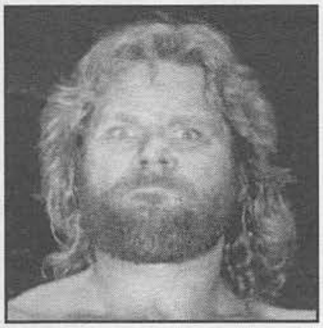
Each Issue, *The Wrestler* will praise the noteworthy and damn those who violate the honor of wrestling. The praiseworthy receive a Thumbs Up, the disgraceful are marked with a Thumbs Down. Here is this month's roll of honor and shame.



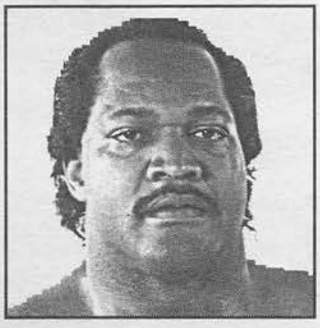
Thumbs Up to Ric Flair. We would have preferred the "Nature Boy" to go out as a fan favorite, but at least he went out in style. "It was a great ride," Flair said after losing his retirement match to Hulk Hogan at Halloween Havoc. A few days later, Flair called Hogan "a great champion who proved a lot to me over the past few months. I still think I'm the better man, but he's wrestling and I'm not." Flair doesn't have to say anything else. He can rest on a great 21-year career in which he happened to lose a few matches to Hogan. Maybe Flair was ready to retire. He leaves behind a tremendous legacy of excellence.



Thumbs Up to Jacques Rougeau. The same weekend Flair and Hogan were wrestling a retirement match, Jacques Rougeau was wrestling his final match, in Montreal. A crowd of 18,000 packed the Forum to watch him battle Pierre in a battle of former partners. But the fans were there to pay homage to Jacques, an underrated scientific wrestler who had already announced his retirement. Pierre attacked Jacques prior to the opening bell, but Jacques recovered and won after piledriving Pierre. Afterward, Jacques and Pierre shook hands and Jacques rode off into the sunset. Humble careers deserve our respect, too.

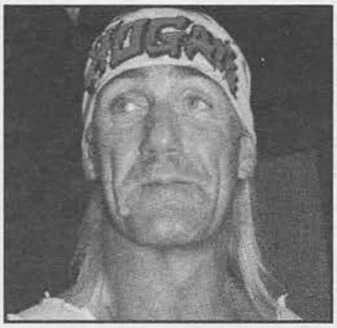


Thumbs Up to Hacksaw Duggan. Duggan is a wrestler most people love, but few respect. He is very demonstrative in his love of the U.S. and sometimes is dismissed a flag-waving fool without much wrestling ability. That's a shame because the Hacksaw Duggan of the old UWF was one of the best brawlers in the world and capable of standing toe-to-toe with Steve Williams, Ted DiBiase, and others. Duggan is getting a chance to prove himself in WCW, where won the U.S. title from Steve Austin in 27 seconds. Duggan validated that win by beating Austin in a rematch at Halloween Havoc. He's a patriot who can wrestle!



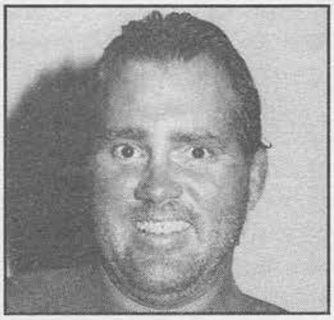
Thumbs Up to Ron Simmons. It has been a long time since we saw the best of Ron Simmons, the man who once won the WCW World title and lost it only because of Big Van Vader's rulebreaking. Simmons had turned into a bitter man who blamed everyone else for his failures. He actually accused WCW officials of conspiring to deny him title shots. Those were ludicrous charges. We're happy to see Simmons in action in ECW. He recently rescued Tasmaniac from an attack by Shane Douglas and Mr. Hughes. We don't care why he did it. We're just happy to have Simmons back. Rulebreaker or fan favorite, he is an excellent athlete.

Thumbs Down

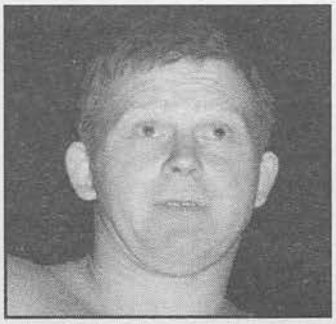


Thumbs Down to Hulk Hogan. First of all, congratulations to the "Hulkster" for retaining the WCW World title in his career vs. career match against Ric Flair. Now down to the nitty-gritty: When is it okay to strike a woman? That's the same as asking, "When is it okay to beat your children?" or "When is it okay to drink and drive?" When it is permissible to hit a woman? It's okay if you're a female wrestler. It's not okay if Sherri Martel jumps into the ring and attacks you. Sherri is strong, but not as strong as Hogan. Knocking her down was unforgivable. Hogan must remember that he sets an example for people.

Thumbs Down to Woman. We don't care who she decides to manage next. In fact, we could really care less what she does next. We would be completely satisfied if Woman left wrestling completely. We couldn't name a single wrestler who benefited from having her as his manager. Woman made a big show out of announcing her latest charge, as The Sandman left ECW. Here's our warning to all wrestlers who are even considering using her services: She'll take and never give. She'll use you for her own purposes and leave you when the going gets tough. We wish she'd change her name from Woman to something more suitable.



Thumbs Down to Brutus Beefcake. His heinous actions at Halloween Havoc were unforgivable. They belong in a category with Owen Hart turning against his brother. Hulk Hogan never did anything to hurt Beefcake and was the first person at the hospital when Beefcake had that terrible parasailing accident in 1990. When Beefcake returned to the WWF in 1993 and was attacked by Money Inc., Hogan came out of retirement to help him. Beefcake thanked Hogan by attacking him several times and trying to attack him again after Havoc. Beefcake is a traitor and a lowlife. A great trust has been betrayed: Hogan's.



Thumbs Down to Bob Backlund. Forget that Backlund has to be the most ridiculous sight we've seen in a wrestling ring in a long time. Backlund has done his best to prove that his WWF World title reign was nothing more than a fluke. He is an angry, bitter man who attacked Arnold Skaaland for a reason that might have made sense in 1983, but is preposterous in 1994. We understand that wrestlers need ways to motivate themselves, but Backlund went too far. If Skaaland threw in the towel too soon in Backlund's 1983 match against The Iron Sheik, it was an honest mistake. Backlund's latest mistake is reprehensible.

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

Montreal, Quebec *(Correspondent—Bertrand Hebert):* More than 18,000 people jammed into the Montreal Form to watch one of their hometown heroes, Jacques Rougeau, wrestle his last match, against his former partner Pierre.

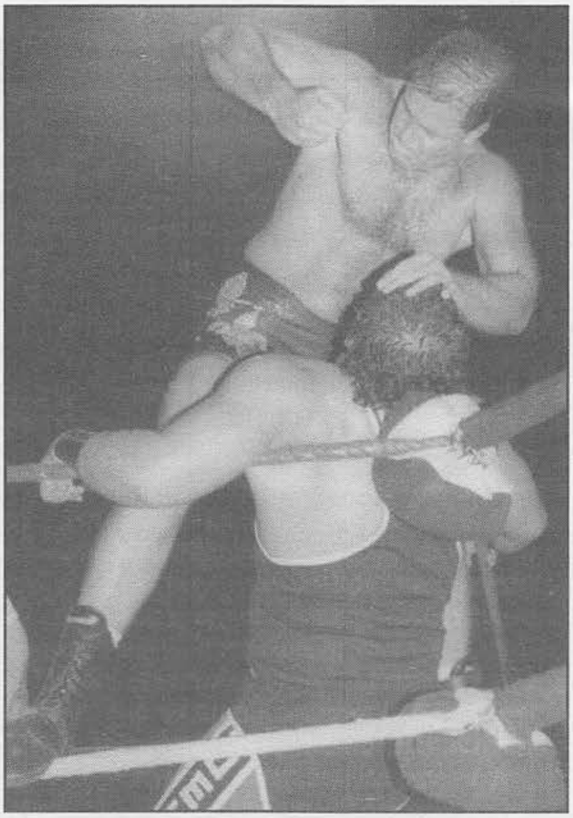
Pat Patterson, Killer Kowalski, Jacques Sr., and Raymond and Armond, Jacques Jr.'s brothers, made special appearances before the match. Then, before the bell could ring, Pierre attacked Jacques. When Jacques was out on the arena floor, Pierre staggered him when he nailed him with a backflip over the top rope.

Jacques wasn't about to lose his last match without putting up a fight. The fans were screaming as he connected with a dropkick off the top rope.

Pierre's biggest mistake was going for a reverse piledriver. Jacques was ready for it. He flipped Pierre over and executed the move on him instead. Pierre couldn't recover and was pinned.

The crowd celebrated with Jacques as "We Are The Champions" blared over the public address system. As Jacques accepted the congratulations of his friends, Pierre offered his hand; Jacques shook it as the fans continued to cheer.

In other bouts: Adam Bomb pinned Kwang the Ninja ... The Bushwhackers beat Well Dunn ... Irwin R. Schyster defeated Bob "Spark Plugg" Holly ... Diesel beat Headshrinker Sionne ... Intercontinental champ Razor Ramon beat Jeff Jarrett ... WWF World champ Bret Hart beat Jim Neidhart ... The Undertaker beat Yokozuna in a casket match.



Jacques Rougeau made his last match a memorable one. He pinned his former partner Pierre in front of 18,000 fans in Montreal. After the match, the two rivals shook hands.

Inkster, MI *(Correspondent—Larry Thomas):* Everyone was expecting a bloodbath when maniacs Sabu and Cactus Jack went at it at the Recreation Center.

Surprisingly, it started out tentatively. But once they locked up, it was a classic no-disqualification match. Jack went after Sabu's injured ribs and even ripped the protective tape off them and choked him with it. Both were hit with chairs outside the ring, where Cactus also suplexed a table onto Sabu.

Within a few minutes, the brawl went back to the dressing. Cactus got into trouble later when his head got caught in the ropes. Sabu leaped off a chair that he had set up in the ring and executed a legdrop on Cactus' head. If that wasn't bad enough, he next put

(Continued on page 56)

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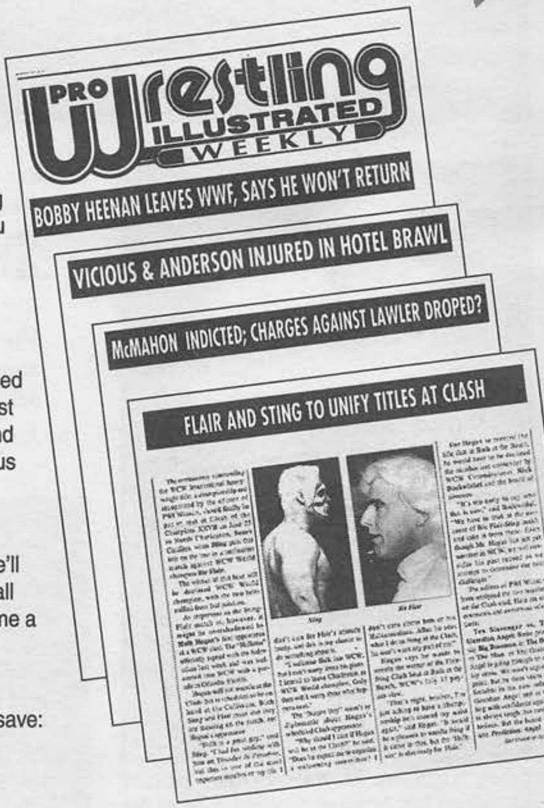

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You Asked Us

Here's the monthly feature that YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR questions! Only the best questions will be answered, so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to:
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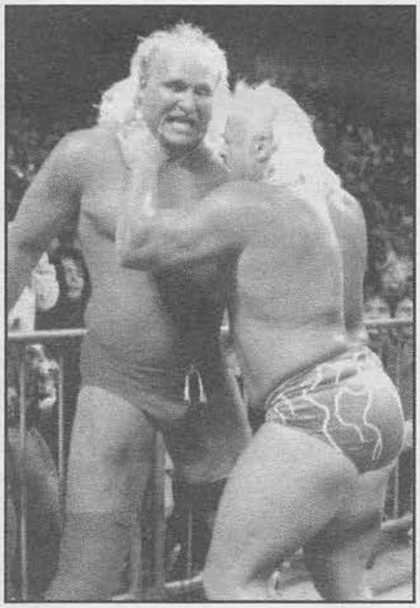

Dave Sullivan is not thrilled about wrestling his brother Kevin. He says he feels he has to do it because of all the terrible things Kevin has done to him and his friend Hulk Hogan.

Q: "I have a question for Dave Sullivan: Do you like wrestling your brother Kevin?"—Jerry Augustine, Wallace, NC

A: **"That's a real good question, Jerry," said Sullivan. "It's a real good question ... it's kind of hard to answer, too. I guess I'd say no, I don't like wrestling Kevin, but he is making me really mad, so I have to fight him and I think I'm doing real good. Kevin is doin' some real bad things. He's sayin' bad things about me and the 'Hulkster' and he's helping The Butcher and Avalanche attack the 'Hulkster' and I don't like that. But as long as I got my magic slippers on—those are the boots the 'Hulkster' gave me—I'll keep helping him fight all the bad guys here in WCW. Even Kevin, if I have to."**

***

Q: "My question is for Mikey Whipwreck: I go to almost every ECW card in Philadelphia. Why do you keep coming back match after match just so you can take all that abuse? You and Cactus Jack hold the ECW tag team belts, but is it worth when you're always in such pain?"—Joe Trankas, Downingtown, PA

A: **"I don't know," said Whipwreck. "I wish I didn't have to do it, but Cactus won't let me quit and the promoters make me sign contracts because the people like to see me. They're all ruining my life. I promised my mother when I lost the ECW TV title that I would never win another title, but then Cactus made me team with him and we beat Public Enemy. I don't know how, but**

(Continued on page 58)

Mikey Whipwreck has felt the pain of many a choke-slam from 911. He doesn't like taking all the punishment that he does in ECW but insists that the promoters and his tag team partner, Cactus Jack, won't let him quit.

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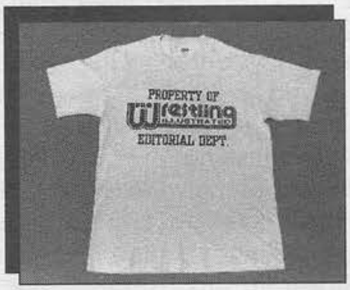

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Which of the following wrestlers did Lex Luger *not* defeat to capture one of his four U.S. heavyweight titles?
1) Nikita Koloff
2) Dusty Rhodes
3) Michael Hayes
4) Stan Hansen

True or False: Dusty Rhodes was once managed by rulebreaking manager Gary Hart.
1) True
2) False

How did Ric Flair severely injure his back in October 1975?
1) Airplane crash
2) Ring injury
3) Automobile accident
4) None of the above

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2860/09-94

INTRODUCING
CHRIS MICHAELS

Photos by Scott Romer

By Brandi Mankiewicz

COMETS ARE KNOWN for their brilliance and awe-inspiring visits to our planet. There are many famous ones that have circled the galaxy for milleniums—and many new ones discovered practically every day. A new comet now entering the wrestling world is Chris "The Comet" Michaels, and he is already starting to shine.

Michaels' tour of the wrestling galaxy began back in 1989. Since then, he has wrestled in several independent promotions, including Smoky Mountain Wrestling and the USWA. He has also done well against more experienced foes in WCW.

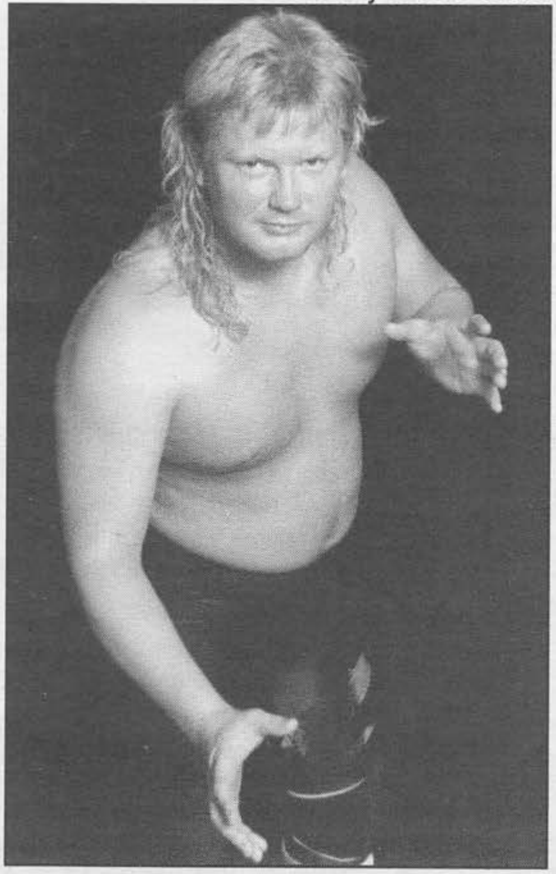
"I enjoy wrestling in the different federations because it gives me a chance to hone my skills against all types of wrestlers," said Michaels. "I've only been in this sport for a few years and I want the chance to try different wrestling styles. I haven't really settled on a style myself, so I like to see what works for other guys."

Though he considers himself a good scientific wrestler, Michaels has tried all different styles and he has found success in both singles and tag team competition. As a singles competitor, he has consistently proven himself against both rookies and seasoned veterans. His biggest win came against veteran Rip Rogers.

"I'd rather wrestle against guys with more experience than me," said Michaels. "No matter whether you win or lose the match, you always walk away from the ring with a greater respect for the sport and further insight into what it takes to be successful."

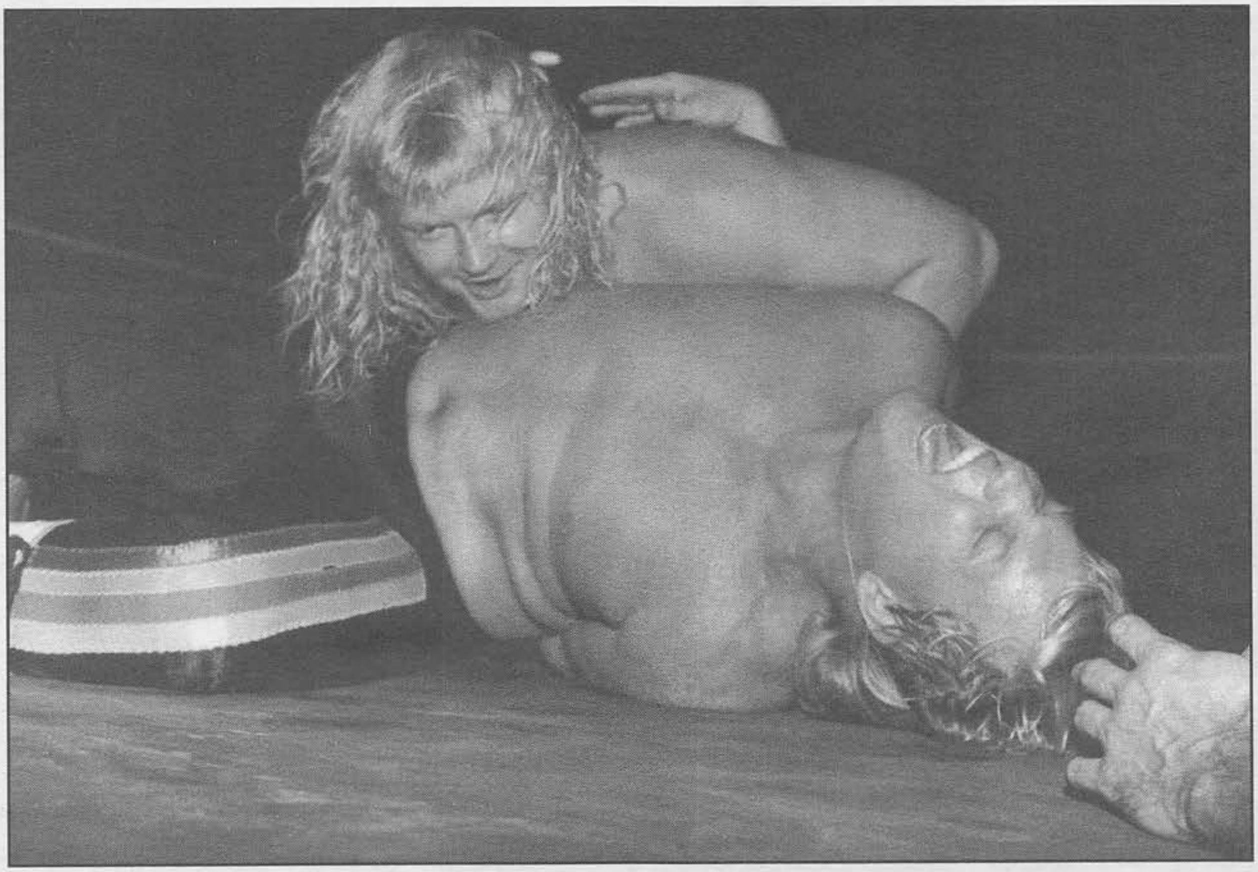
The biggest success for "The Comet" came in the USWA, where he won the tag team title with Todd Morton from PG-13.

"It was the greatest feeling," Michaels recalled. "To finally win a championship belt you can't describe the feeling. I knew from that moment on that I have what it takes to be successful in the ring over the long haul. We beat a good team. That doesn't



Chris "The Comet" Michaels has wrestled in WCW and several prominent independent organizations during his five-year pro career. He considers himself a good scientific wrestler and is always trying to improve his skills.

There are millions of bright stars in the wrestling world. Now there's a "Comet" on the horizon—Chris "The Comet" Michaels—and he hopes he is well on his way to a brilliant career



happen by accident."

Michaels learned early what it takes to be successful in sports. While in high school in Franklin, Kentucky, Michaels excelled in both baseball and football.

"Playing those sports helped me develop my wrestling style," explained the 21-year-old. "Football helped me to dig down deep and play physical and aggressive. Baseball helped me to learn to think fast on my feet and to move with lightning speed when I need to."

Michaels' talent caught the eye of SMW's Tracey Smothers a few years ago.

"I met Chris one day at a gym," explained Smothers, "and we started talking. He told me that he was interested in a wrestling career. So I told him to join me in the sparring ring. He didn't get the best of me, but he definitely showed me that he had the raw ability to go somewhere in this sport. I just helped him bring out some more of that talent."

"Tracey was great," Michaels said. "He took time out of his schedule to teach me different moves and holds. I sparred against him and afterward we would review the tapes together and he'd offer me pointers on how to win."

At 220 pounds, Michaels is smaller than most of the prominent wrestlers today, but he knows there a lot of wrestlers even smaller than him who have gone on to become superstars.

"I may be smaller than some of the others," said Michaels, "but I know that I am capable of making an impact. Look at The Kid. Look at Jeff Jarrett. Look at Jushin Liger. You don't need size to be a great wrestler today."

Michaels has already mastered a lot of basic holds and maneuvers and is a solid mat wrestler. He was trained by Smoky Mountain's Tracey Smothers and already has a USWA tag team title to his credit.

Another wrestler who influenced Michaels' career was Rick Steamboat.

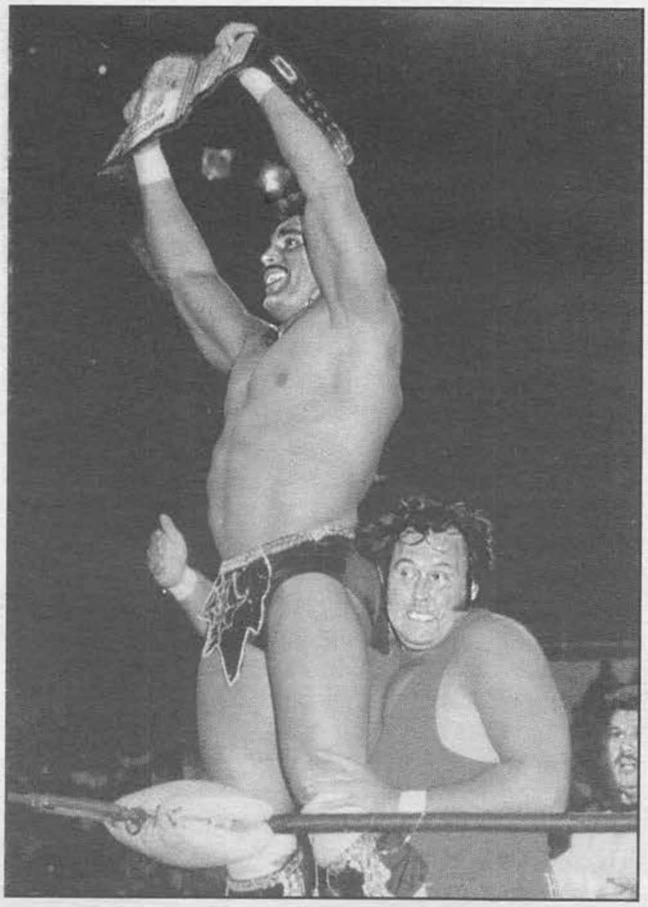
"Steamboat is my favorite wrestler," said Michaels. "He can wrestle on the mat, he can attack you from the air, he can go toe-to-toe with anyone and come out on top. And he always fights fair."

Michaels has a long way to go before he can start comparing himself to Steamboat, but he is off to a good start. "I realize that success won't come without putting in a lot of hard work. I'm willing to make whatever sacrifices necessary to make it in this sport."

That's the kind of attitude a man like Steamboat would appreciate. □

Q&A

Each month, *THE WRESTLER* will present a "Question and Answer" forum with an important figure in the wrestling world. It is your chance to meet wrestling's biggest stars as they answer the questions uppermost in fans' minds



Honky Tonk Man spoils Johnny B. Badd's championship celebration by attacking him from behind.

Q: Hello, Honky. It's a pleasure to be here.

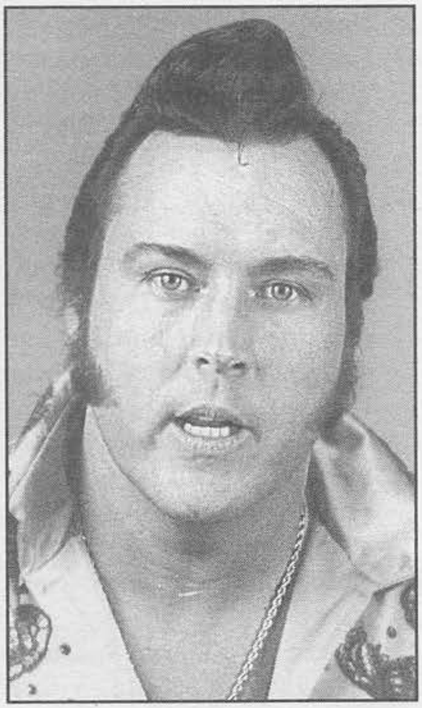
A: Dave, it's a pleasure to be here with you, too, and before we start, I'd just like to thank all of my wonderful fans out there for their support. The way you people ...

Q: Honky, I'm sorry to tell you this, but the fans out there aren't supporting you. They're booing you. There's no accounting for taste, but that's just the way it is. Nothing I can do about it, although I've certainly tried.

A: Yeah, but you like me, don't you, Dave? You're a big fan of mine, right? I have your support.

Q: That's right, you've always had my support, Honky, but I'm afraid I can't say the same thing about the rest of the fans out there. No offense to Kathy Bates in *Misery*, but I'm your

THE HONKY TONK MAN



IT HAS OFTEN been said the only way to get respect in wrestling is to win a major title. But that's not always the case. On June 2, 1987, The Honky Tonk Man defeated Rick Steamboat for the WWF Intercontinental title. Most people called it a fluke. Honky Tonk went on to defend the I-C title for one year, two months, 27 days. It remains the longest I-C title reign of all-time.

But success didn't mean respect for The Honky Tonk Man. He was belittled for his perceived lack of ability. Sporting long sideburns and slicked-back hair, Honky Tonk was called a cheap Elvis Presley impersonator who couldn't win a match without cheating. Manager Jimmy Hart campaigned for Honky Tonk, but he never got the respect he thought he deserved.

Cool and cocky, Honky Tonk entered WCW in the summer of 1994. He defeated some top wrestlers, but still received no respect. At Halloween Havoc, Honky Tonk wrestled well in a TV title match against champion Johnny B. Badd. However, the match was declared a draw when the 10-minute time-limit expired.

Detractors call Honky Tonk goofy, talentless, and annoying. Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum, Honky Tonk's biggest supporter in the media, calls Honky Tonk, "confident, cool, and perhaps the most underrated wrestler of our generation."

He sat down with Honky Tonk for this interview. Honky brought his guitar.

number-one fan. The difference is that I'm not going to handcuff you to a bed and chop off your foot with an ax.

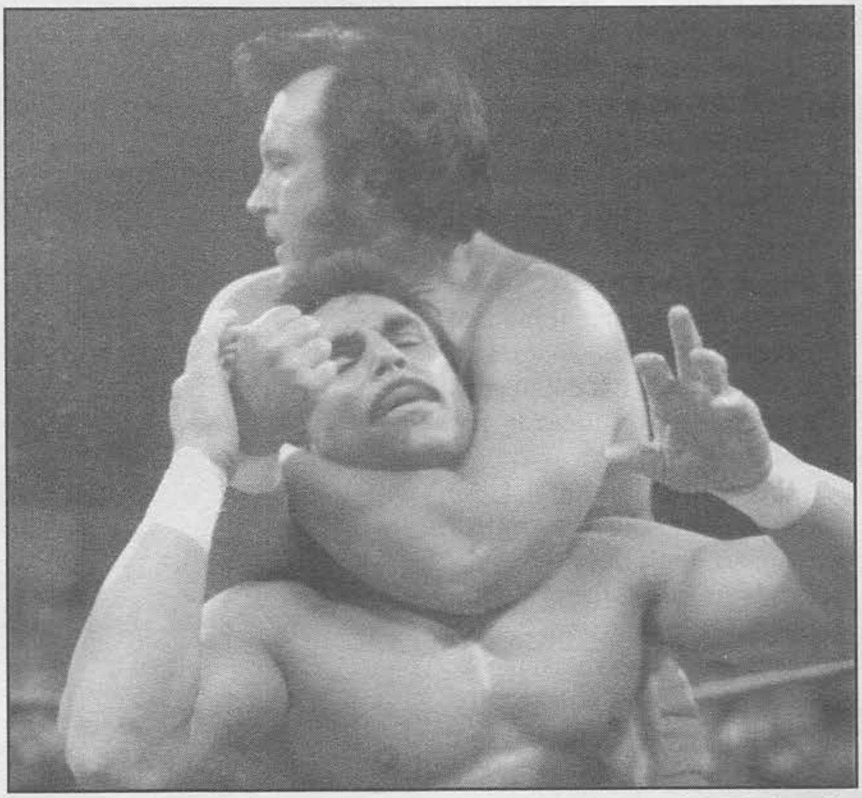
A: I sure as heck hope not, Dave, 'cause that would hurt real bad. But you know what, Dave, I don't care about the fans out there. If they're not smart enough to recognize the greatest wrestler of all-time, then there's nothing I can do about it. You know what they say, you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Q: That's right. There were critics who didn't like Elvis Presley when he first started out.

A: Elvis who?

Q: Elvis Presley. You know, the singer. The one who tried to imitate you.

A: Yeah, I know who you're talking about. But like I said, if the fans don't know talent



The Honky Tonk Man was in command for much of his bout with TV champion Johnny B. Badd before the 10-minute time-limit expired. He says there never should have been such a time limit to begin with, and that he won't let Badd escape with the belt in future matches.

when they see it, then maybe they should waste their time doing something else, like watching *Seinfeld* or *Murder She Wrote*. I don't know. But you can't tell me that there aren't a lot of people out there just like yourself who root for The Honky Tonk Man. I've heard them cheering. I know I have.

Q: Sure, they're out there, but they're definitely in the minority. Nothing we can do about it. But there's something you can do about it.

A: What's that?

Q: You can go out there and beat Johnny B. Badd for the WCW TV title, that's what you can do.

A: And I plan on doing just that, Dave. You know, that belt would've been mine at Halloween Havoc if they didn't ring the bell after 10 minutes ...

Q: Honky, it was a time-limit match. The bell was supposed to ring after 10 minutes.

A: I know that. My point is, why did Johnny B. Badd need a time limit? You know, my good friend Lord Steven Regal did the same thing and everybody accused him of trying to duck his opponents. Johnny B. Badd does it and nobody says a word. Ric Flair didn't need a time limit. The tag team title matches don't have time limits. How come the TV title match has a time limit?

Q: That's just the way it is. I think most people who watched that match felt that you would've been the winner on points if there were judges and that it was only a matter of time until you pinned Badd.

A: That's right. That's exactly right! Badd was finished. You know what happens to champions when they lose? They become ex-champions, and that's what was going to happen to Johnny B. Badd. He was going to become the former WCW TV champion and I was going to be champion. It's time someone brought some respect back to that title, and The Honky Tonk man is the man for the job. And you all remember what happened the last time I won a championship? I brought some respect to that Intercontinental title, too.

Q: How can I forget?

A: Everybody thought it was a fluke when I beat Ricky Steamboat, but then I went on to become the longest-reigning Intercontinental champion of all-time. That record still stands, doesn't it, Dave?

Q: Yes, it does. It might stand forever. And, yet, still nobody gave you any credit. Why is that?

A: I don't know. Maybe it's because I've got what everybody else wants. I'm cool, I'm cocky, and I'm bad. I play the guitar and I'm the greatest wrestler of all-time. I've got it all, and good looks, too. See these sideburns? I spend an hour on 'em every morning, just after I get up and pick my guitar while the sun is coming up.

Q: Maybe it's the way you look that gets to people. You'd probably get a lot more respect

Honky Tonk Man was managed by Jimmy Hart when he was in the WWF, but says he can't believe "The Mouth Of The South" is now in Hulk Hogan's camp. He says he hasn't spoken to Hart since arriving in WCW.

if you shaved those sideburns, got a different haircut, and didn't sing in the ring.

A: Sure, but that wouldn't be me! That wouldn't be The Honky Tonk Man that people have come to know and love. I'm not trying to fit into people's preconceived notions of what a wrestler is supposed to look like. I'm unique! I'm my own man! I've gotta be me!

Q: How about Jimmy Hart? You two have a long relationship going back to the WWF and you seemed to get along very well. Now here you are in the same federation again and it doesn't look like you say a word to each other. What is going on there?

A: I have nothing to say to Jimmy Hart and he has nothing to say to me. He didn't do anything to wrong me, but I'm just a little disappointed that he chose to go with Hulk Hogan. I don't know what Jimmy's thinking about, but I think it's clear as daylights that I don't need him anymore. I'm a winner without him.

Q: So you two haven't said a word to each other since you came here?

A: Not word one, Dave, and that's the truth, but that's what happens when two people have nothing to say to each other. They don't talk.

Q: What do you think of Hulk Hogan?

A: Dave, you should know by now how I feel about that phony?

Q: I think I do, but I'd like to hear you tell me in your own words.

A: Why, I'd be glad to. The man is a phony, like I just told you. He uses the same old moves all the times. Me, I'm always adding new moves and holds to my game. And all Hogan does is wrestle. He can't sing or dance or play the guitar. You ever heard him sing, Dave?

Q: Never once.

A: My point exactly.

Q: Do you think you need a manager in WCW?

A: The only reason The Honky Tonk Man ever needed a manager was to handle the day-to-day business. You know, I've got better things to do than balance my books and schedule my next match, but I'll do it, as long as it means more money in my pocket. Besides, I never trusted Jimmy Hart anyway.

Q: Maybe he could've gotten you an extra 10 minutes with Badd.

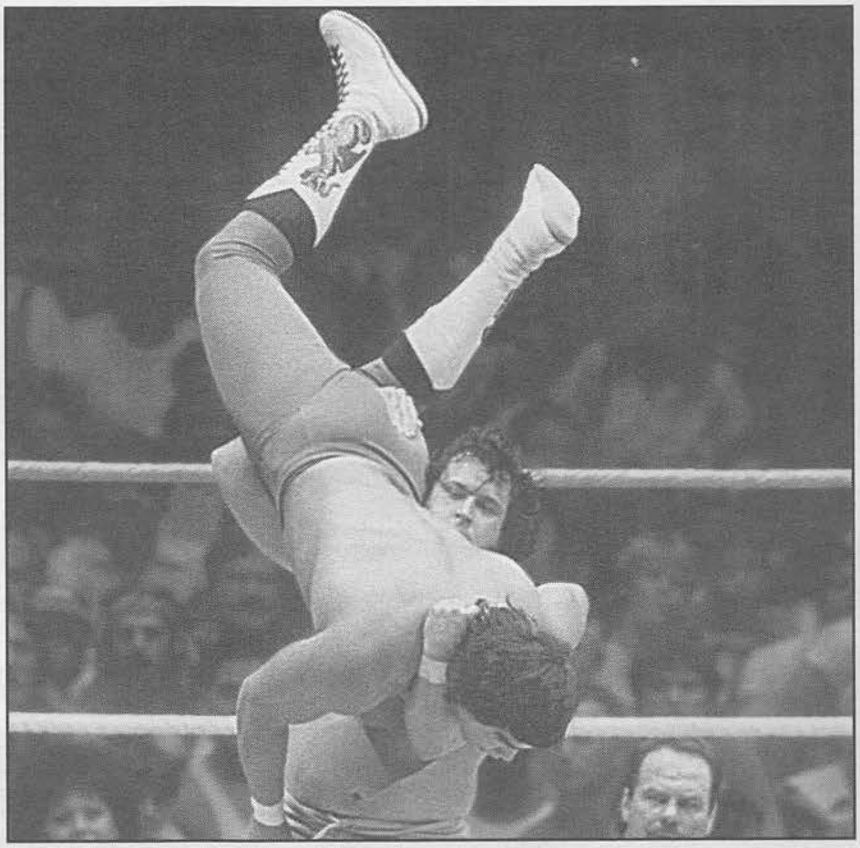
A: Next time I won't need 10 minutes. Badd's on the ropes. He's just where I want him.

Q: You know, Honky, we're just about running out of time and I see you brought your guitar. Care to do a duet?

A: With you, Dave? That would be great! I'd just love to do that. ***(Honky Tonk Man picks up his guitar and tunes it)*** **Okay, what should we sing?**

Q: How about the old Honky Tonk Man song?

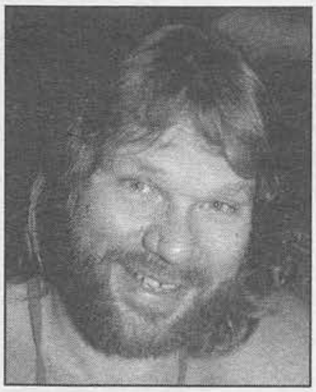
A: Okay, an oldie but a goodie. But we're going to have to take out the part about Jimmy. □



He doesn't get much respect, but Honky Tonk Man is still the longest-reigning Intercontinental champ in history. He beat Rick Steamboat in 1987 and reigned for 14 months. Now his goal is to win the WCW TV belt and make it a respected title again.

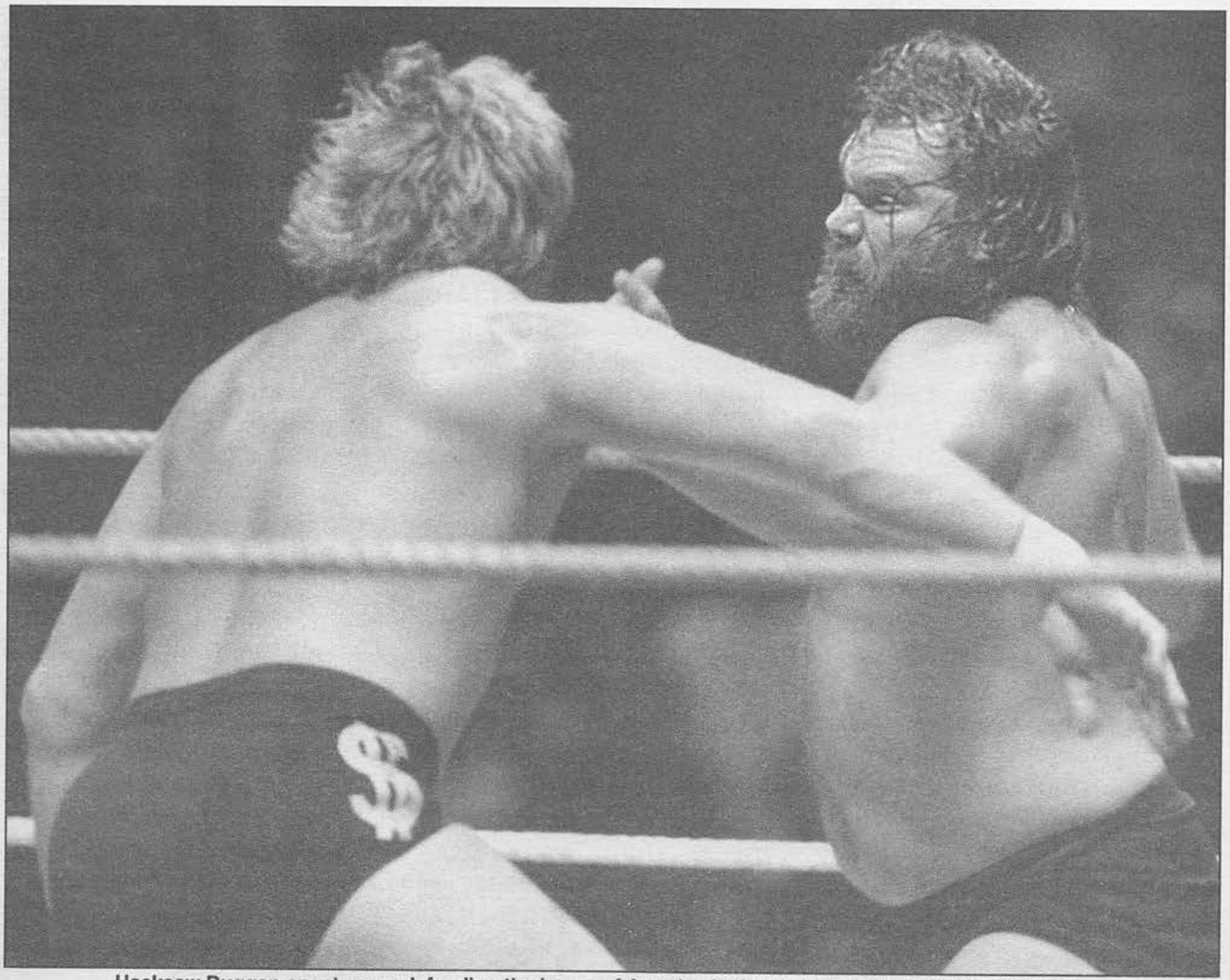
THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

X-RAY



HACKSAW DUGGAN

Each month THE WRESTLER'S panel of experts will offer candid opinions of one of wrestling's stars. Whether an up-and-coming youngster or an established superstar in his own right, our panel will always be frank and honest without fear of reprisal



Hacksaw Duggan spent years defending the honor of America in the WWF, but the patriotic brawler's number-one priority in WCW right now is defending the U.S. title.

CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"You gotta love a guy like Hacksaw Duggan. He's the kind of man who makes me believe in the American dream. He's not the most talented guy the Captain has seen, but he makes the most of what he has. He's tough, he's enthusiastic, and he knows how to win. What you see is what you get with this man. I don't think people realize how strong he is. You think he's just a flag-waver, but he's a lot more. He's one of the most underrated wrestlers in the world."

Capt. Lou Albano has led 13 different tag teams—most recently The Headshrinkers—to a record 17 WWF World tag team titles.

KILLER KOWALSKI

"The guy certainly has a lot of fans, not that that really means anything. The thing that bothers me about Hacksaw Duggan is that he hasn't changed much over the years of his career. He still uses the same moves and tactics that he used 10 years ago. That's why his career had been going downhill, at least 'til he went to WCW. I expect his U.S. title reign to be short. His winning it *was* a fluke, if you ask me—and you did."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rule-breakers in the sport's history, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.

DORY FUNK JR.

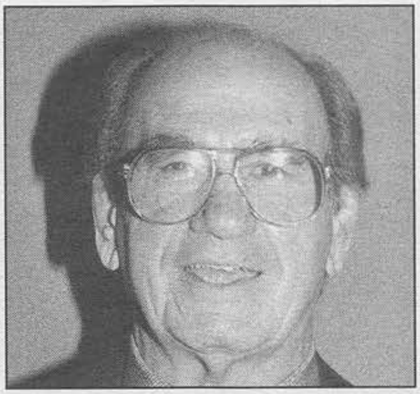
"Duggan is not a very intimidating wrestler, in my opinion. His opponents know he's a nice guy at heart, even though he is a good brawler. But I think that works in his favor. Opponents tend to underestimate him. They think they know his tendencies and his strategies, and figure sooner or later he'll make a big mistake. But that can be a mistake on their part. Duggan's no pushover. On his best day, he can hold his own with anyone."

Dory Funk Jr. held the NWA World championship from 1969 to 1973. He still wrestles from time to time.

FABULOUS MOOLAH

"He's not pretty, darlin', but he knows how to wrestle. I was happy to see him win the U.S. title, not because I like his style, but because he paid his dues for years and deserved to win a major championship. I hope he puts aside his obsession with defendin' America's honor. Patriotism is a wonderful thing, but it doesn't hurt to look out for yourself, too. Choose your opponents carefully and focus on winning titles. I think Hacksaw has finally learned to do that."

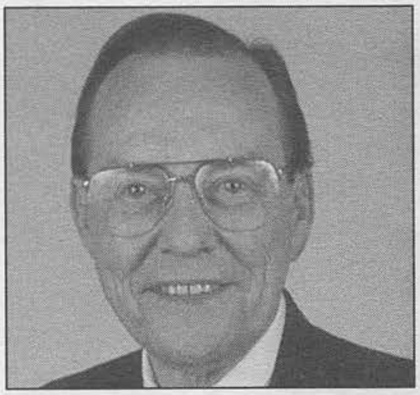
Fabulous Moolah, the finest woman wrestler in history, held the World title for 28 years. She trains wrestlers in Columbia, South Carolina.



LOU THESZ

"I wonder how good Duggan could have been if he had focused more on the basics of the sport. He's a former football player, and it shows in the ring. He relies almost exclusively on power moves. If he worked on some technical moves and learned some of the more fundamental holds, he could be that much better. Don't get me wrong, he is very good at what he does, but he is a little too one-dimensional. You don't want to be too predictable in a sport this tough."

Lou Thesz held the NWA World title six times during his fabulous 50-year career. Many consider him the greatest all-around wrestler ever.



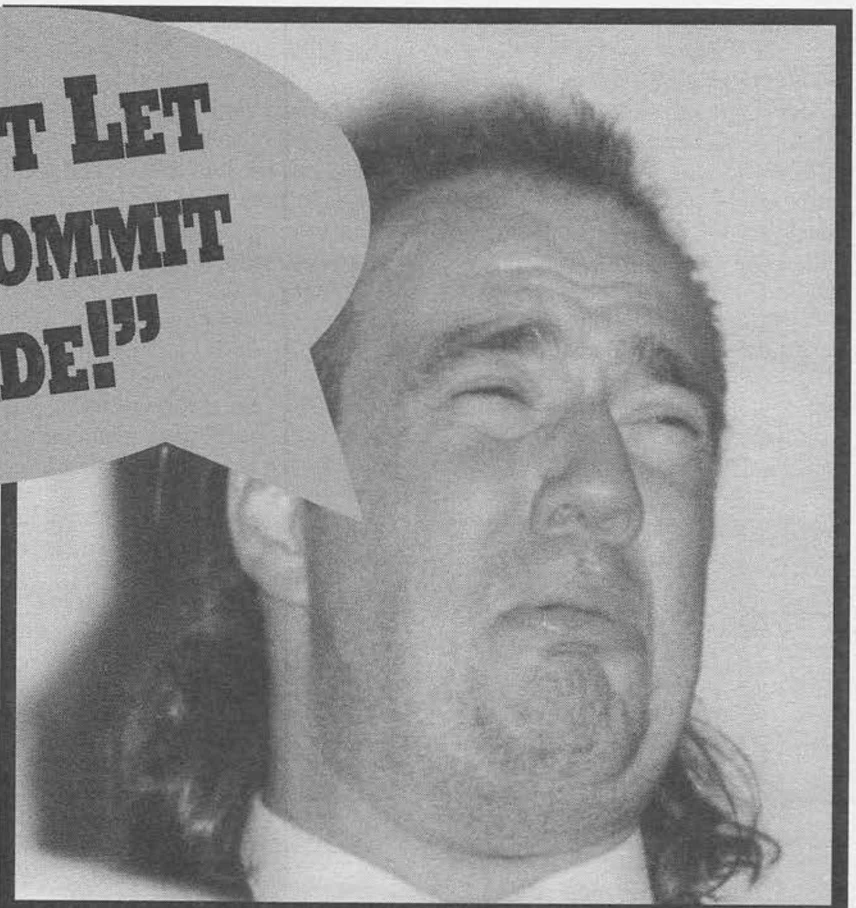
GORDON SOLIE

"Hacksaw Duggan is a man who should inspire younger wrestlers. He works hard and uses the tools he has to maximum effectiveness. Few wrestlers have the ability to feed off the support of the fans and will themselves to victory the way Hacksaw does. He can get in trouble occasionally by playing to the fans too much when he should be trying to put away an opponent. I may be in the minority, but I think he could reign as U.S. champ for quite a while."

Gordon Solie has expertly analyzed pro wrestling on television for 35 years. He periodically appears on WCW telecasts.

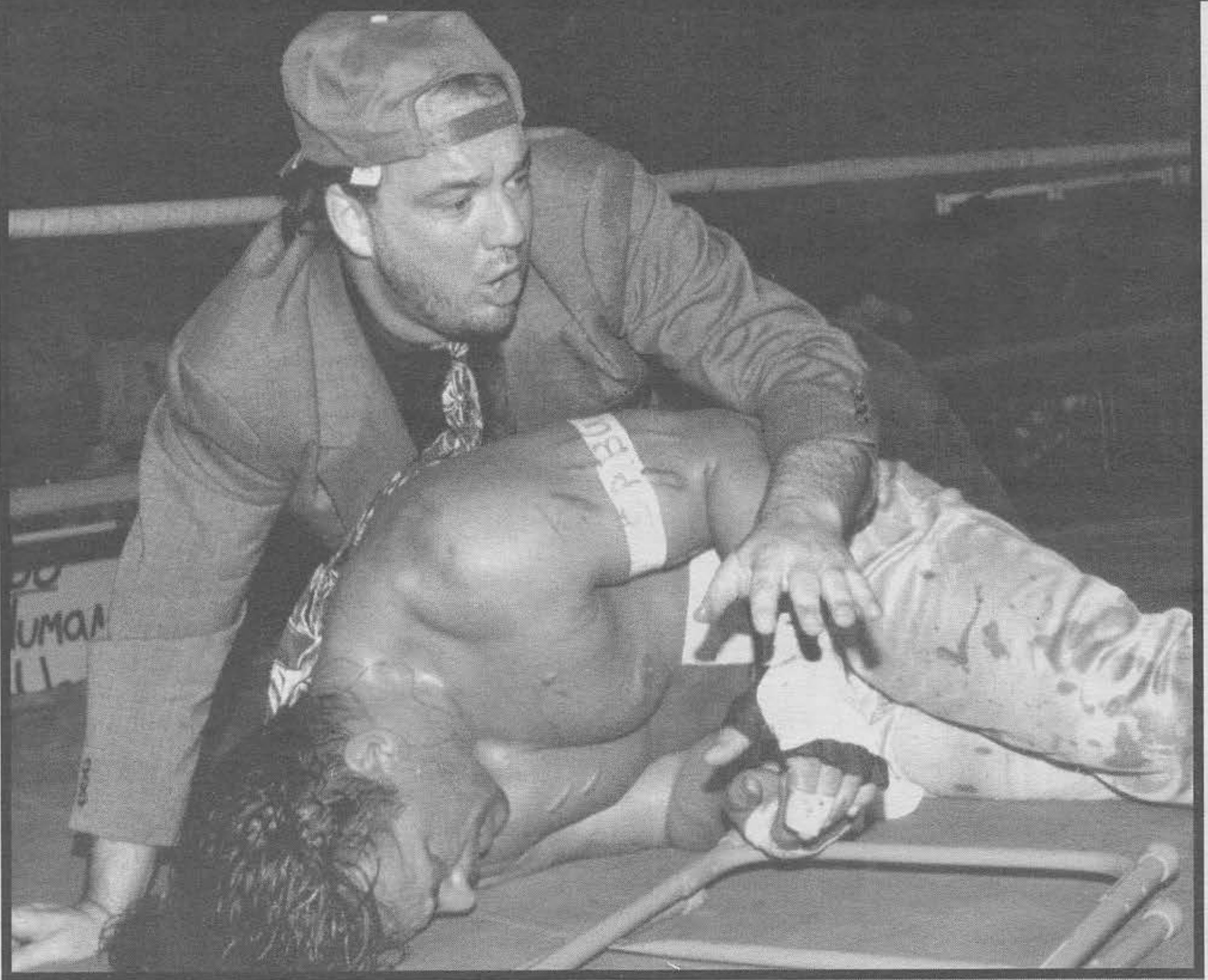
Paul E. Dangerously

"I WON'T LET SABU COMMIT SUICIDE!"



Paul E. Dangerously is known as one of the most heartless men in this sport. But a horrific injury to a unique wrestler under his care gave us a rare inside look at a man we all thought had no heart

Driven To Tears:

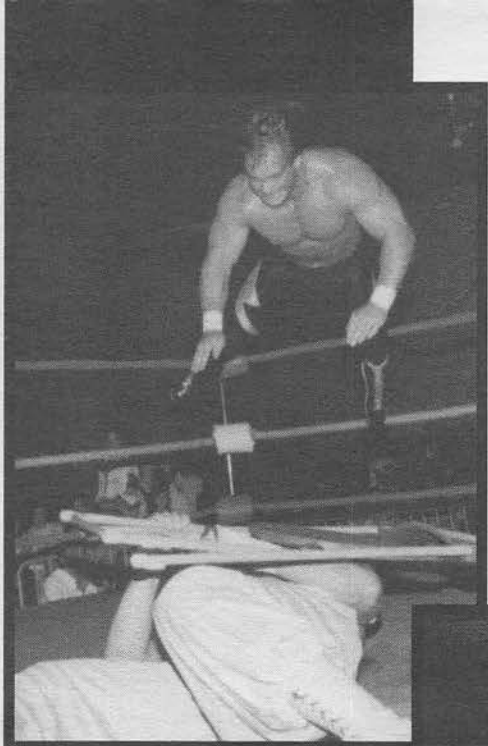


By Ed Emelett

PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY is not a nice guy. He'll tell you that himself. But at the heart of the psycho-yuppie borderline-insane manager is a pure winner. His track record speaks for itself. Whether in Memphis, Atlanta, or Philadelphia, there's no denying the success of the "manager we all love to hate."

"Yeah, he's successful, but at what price?", said "Beautiful" Bobby Eaton. "He did great things for the Dangerous Alliance, but now it's like I've never even known the guy. He didn't care for me, or anyone of us, on a personal level, it was all business. Never took time out to even ask us how we were doing. All he cared about was winning."

Winning is what Dangerously



Sabu took a beating from Chris Benoit recently in Philadelphia, so much so that he was coughing up blood after the match.

It's a wonder Sabu isn't sidelined more often with injuries. His wild aerial attacks (right) often leave both him and his opponents brutalized (below).

does best, and he seems to be at it again in Extreme Championship Wrestling. Already under his tutelage is the mighty 911, who has torn through ECW in his rookie year—much to the Paul E.'s delight.

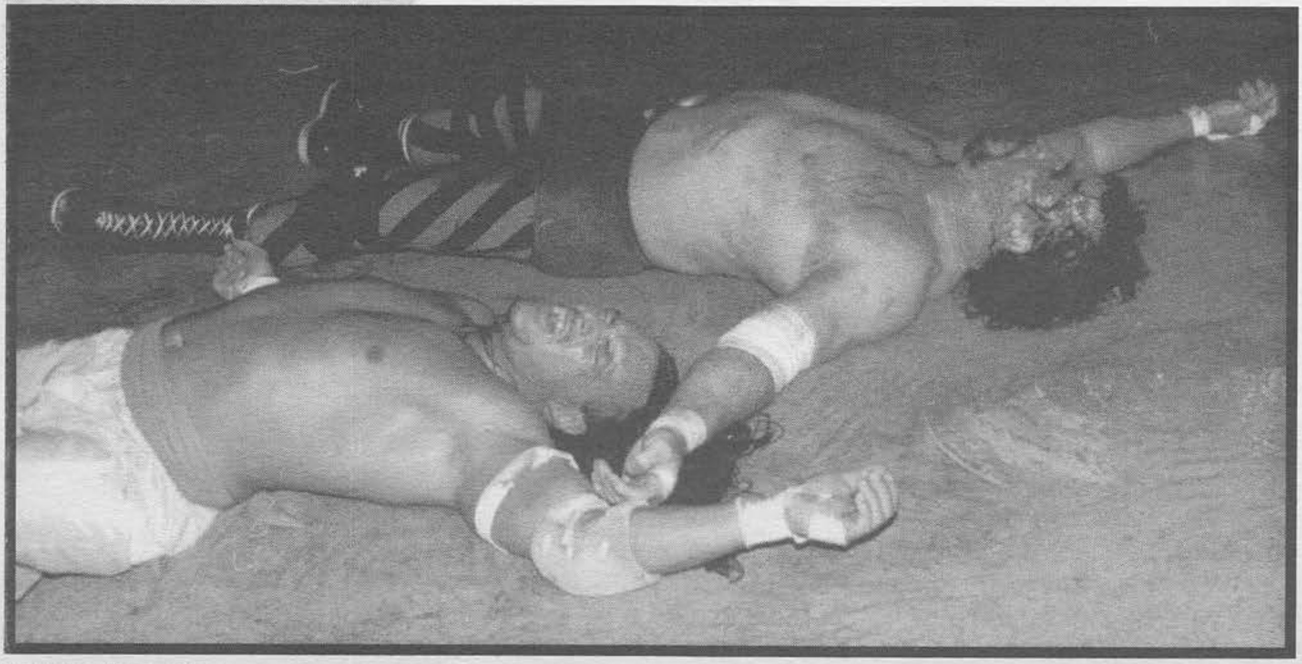
But another wrestler Dangerously cares for, Sabu, seems to have a special place in Paul E.'s heart. He has gone to great lengths to nurture the career of this reckless wildman. Paul E. knows that Sabu is special.

And probably for the first time in his career, he may be concerned more about the welfare of his wrestler than about winning at all costs.

Such concern was never more evident than at Philadelphia's ECW Arena on October 1. Sabu was scheduled to wrestle the high-flying Chris Benoit. But Paul E. wanted to pull Sabu out of the match due to an injury he received in a match against Cactus Jack the night before (Sabu moonsaulted himself from the second rope onto Jack, who was outside the ring, but missed and landed stomach-first on the safety rail; he cracked three ribs).

When match time came, Paul E. came to ringside, telling the fans and Benoit what had happened the previous night. But before he could get the words out of his mouth, Sabu literally crawled to the ring, wanting to fight.

"I begged Sabu not to get in the ring that night.", Dangerously said in unfamiliar gentle tones. "Live to fight another day. Discretion is the better part of valor. Get disqualified. Let me use the phone! Let 911 wrestle for you! But no. People



don't understand. That's not the kind of man Sabu is.

"When you accept the responsibility of being the manager of the most suicidal, most homicidal wrestler of all-time—diving off balconies, moonsaulting through tables, practically crippling his opponents—you think you've seen it all. Sabu came down to ringside, and I never, *ever,* saw a look in his eye like that. It was frightening. It was right then that I knew that if I didn't do something—stop the match, hold him back, *anything*—I knew he was going to kill himself. I won't let Sabu commit suicide!"

The care and devotion Dangerously has for this special individual was obvious. Nevertheless, being a creature bred for battle, Sabu entered the ring and attacked Benoit. As the match progressed, astute fans noticed that Paul E. was living and dying with every move Sabu bravely attempted. The India native had trouble walking, let alone executing his high-flying maneuvers.

The end of the contest came when Sabu tried to execute his moonsault on Benoit, who lay flat on his back in the center of the ring. Just as Sabu was about to make contact, Benoit lifted his knees, and Sabu caught the full force of the load squarely on his broken ribs.

He laid there for a few minutes, not moving, like a person who had been hit by a car. Then, suddenly, tremendous amounts of blood began to pour out of his mouth. Sabu was bleeding internally. The crimson stains covered the ring. Sabu himself was a bloody mess. Paul E. could stand no more. The referee stopped the match.

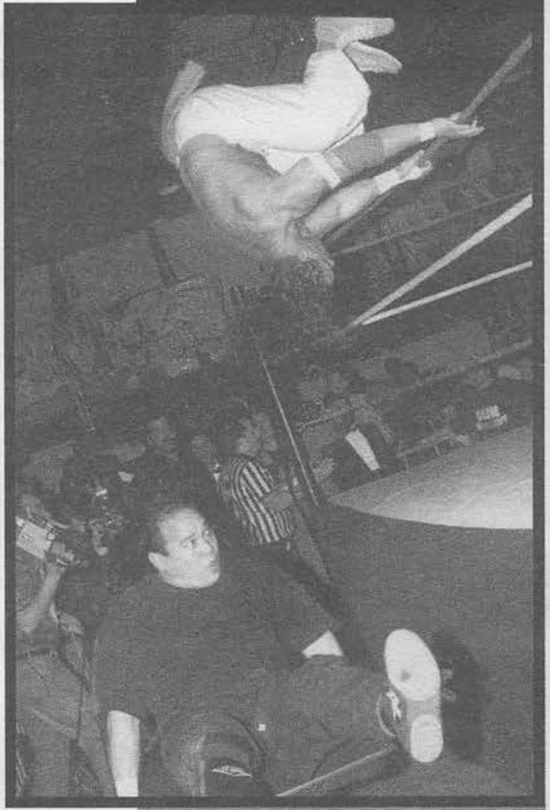
Paul E. and 911 carried their fallen warrior from the ring, and the tears in Paul E.'s eyes showed the world how much he does care for his special wrestler.

"I agree with the referee's decision," Dangerously said. "Not 30 minutes beforehand, that same referee saw a man's career nearly end when Tommy Dreamer caned Sandman in the eye. He saw the pain on Sandman's face, the puddles of blood in the dressing room, the screams of horror from Woman.

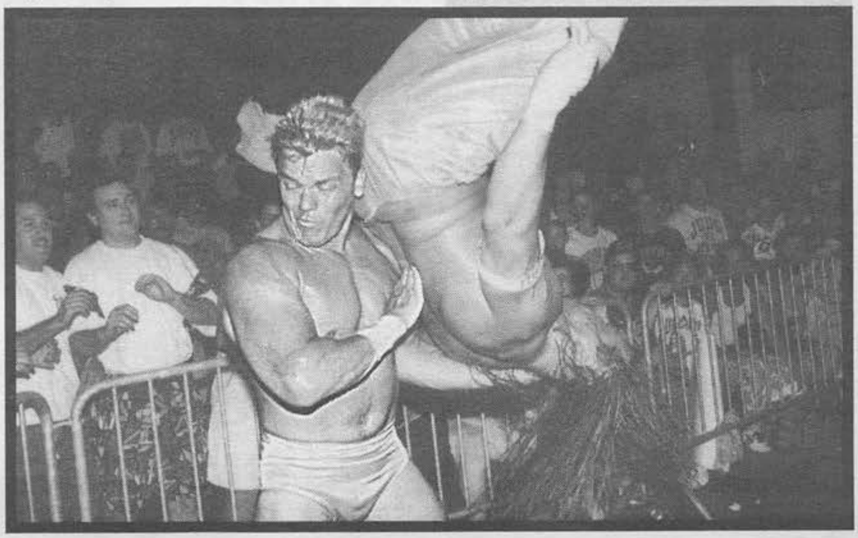
"Thirty minutes after that, Sabu nearly kills himself by dragging himself around the ring, spitting up blood. Some people might have said 'Let him go! This is ECW!' But no—I begged and pleaded with the ref to stop the match. I care for this man like I cared for no other wrestler I have *ever* managed, and I knew Sabu wouldn't stop the match on his own. He just doesn't know any better. He's not that kind of man."

As Dangerously left the ECW arena that cool autumn night, he was alone. He was extremely quiet, still trying to digest the evening's events.

A casual observer would have noticed the Corvette Dangerously stepped into; it's the sign of a winner. A more astute reporter noticed the tears in his eyes; the sign of a person. □

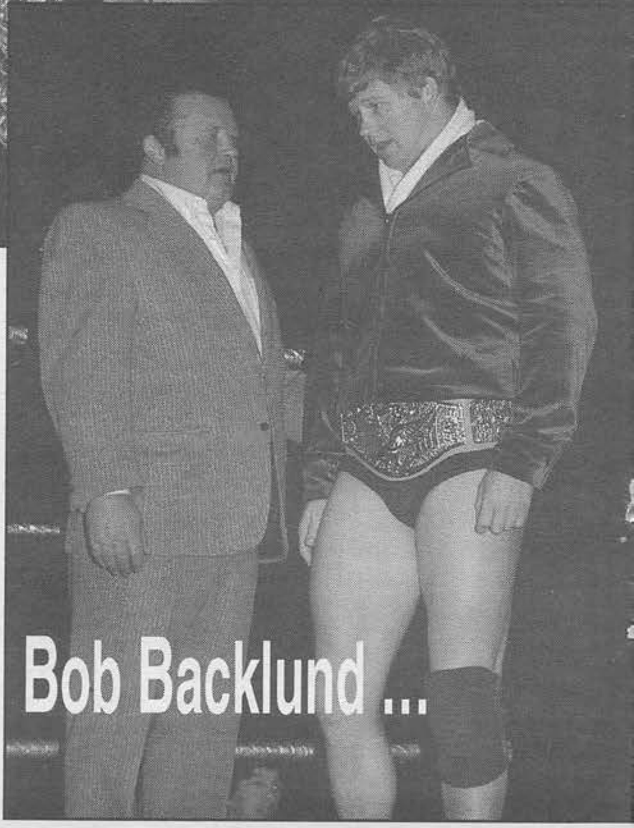


Paul E. Dangerously is concerned—and rightly so—that Sabu's recklessness (above, against Pat Tanaka, and below, against Shane Douglas) will prematurely end his career, and perhaps his very life.



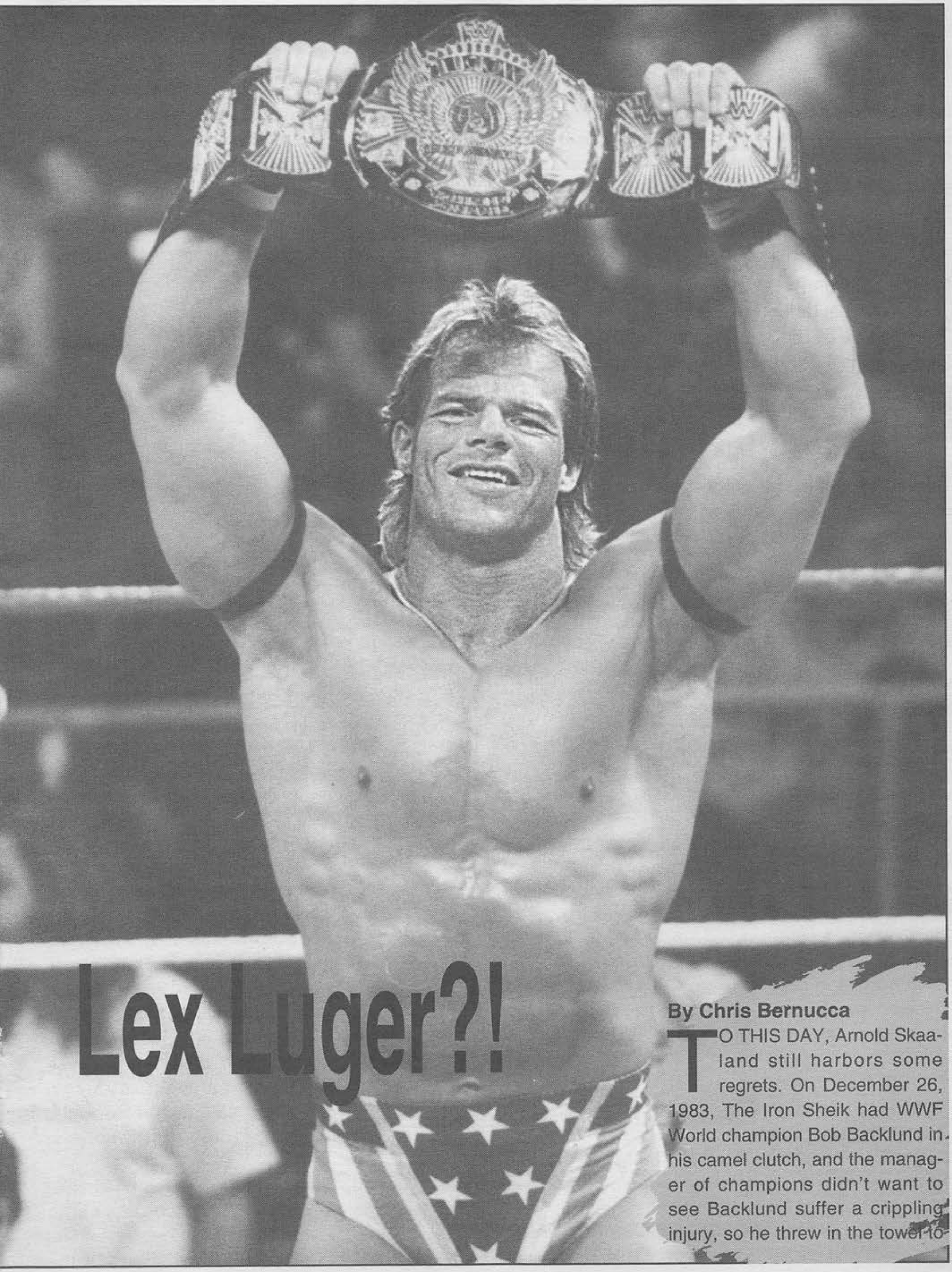
ARNOLD SKAALAND GOES FOR THE *THREE-PEAT:*

Bruno Sammartino ...



Bob Backlund ...

Arnold Skaaland may have thrown in the towel 11 years ago, but he's not ready to quit managing just yet. Don't be surprised if he recruits Lex Luger to go after Bob Backlund–and another WWF World title!



Lex Luger?!

By Chris Bernucca

TO THIS DAY, Arnold Skaaland still harbors some regrets. On December 26, 1983, The Iron Sheik had WWF World champion Bob Backlund in his camel clutch, and the manager of champions didn't want to see Backlund suffer a crippling injury, so he threw in the towel to

signify the end of the match. He's not sorry he submitted on behalf of his wrestler; he's sorry he allowed his wrestler to compete in the match with a severely injured back.

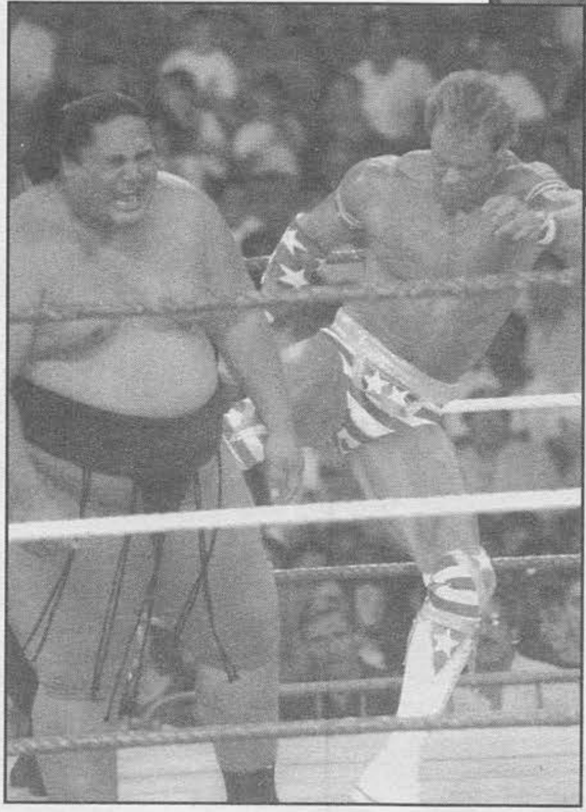
To this day, Backlund still harbors animosity. He had held that World title for nearly six years until that fateful night in Madison Square Garden and has failed to reach that pinnacle since. He maintains that he would have broken the hold of The Iron Sheik and retained the WWF World title. He keeps that same towel as a reminder of a night gone horribly wrong.

Backlund insists that he has not talked to Skaaland since that awful day in 1983. They went their own separate ways, never once taking a few minutes to discuss what had happened. Backlund was so despondent, so bitter, that he left the sport as a full-time competitor for nearly a decade. He resurfaced in the WWF several years ago.

But his recent foray into rulebreaking set the wrestling world on its ear and demanded a reaction from Skaaland. Despite his lack of communication with Backlund the last 11 years, he probably knows the former WWF World champ better than any other figure in the sport. Skaaland appeared on a WWF telecast to give his version of the towel-throwing incident and was attacked by Backlund, who put his former manager in the chicken wing. Backlund's eyes bulged out of his head as he gained some sort of sadistic revenge on a man who only did what he thought was right.

The 71-year-old Skaaland was physically shaken up by the attack but was more pained by the emotions he felt when he got an up-close look at what happened to the man he used to treat like a son.

"Bob and I had something special," said Skaaland. "It hurt to lose the title, but it hurt more that he stopped talking to me. I threw in the towel because that was my only recourse. He was injured coming into the match, and I didn't want to see that injury become permanent. When he attacked me, I lost all respect for him. Now Bob Backlund has done more than end a friendship. He's trying to start a war."



Since turning rulebreaker, Backlund has become the central figure in the federation. Fans hate him and shower him with derisive chants of "has-been." His use of the chicken wing is confounding opponents. At press time, he was headed for a Survivor Series title showdown against Hart.

Luger showed against Yokozuna that he has more than enough talent to win the WWF World title. With an experienced mastermind like Skaaland in his corner, he would stand an even greater chance of winning the belt if given the chance.

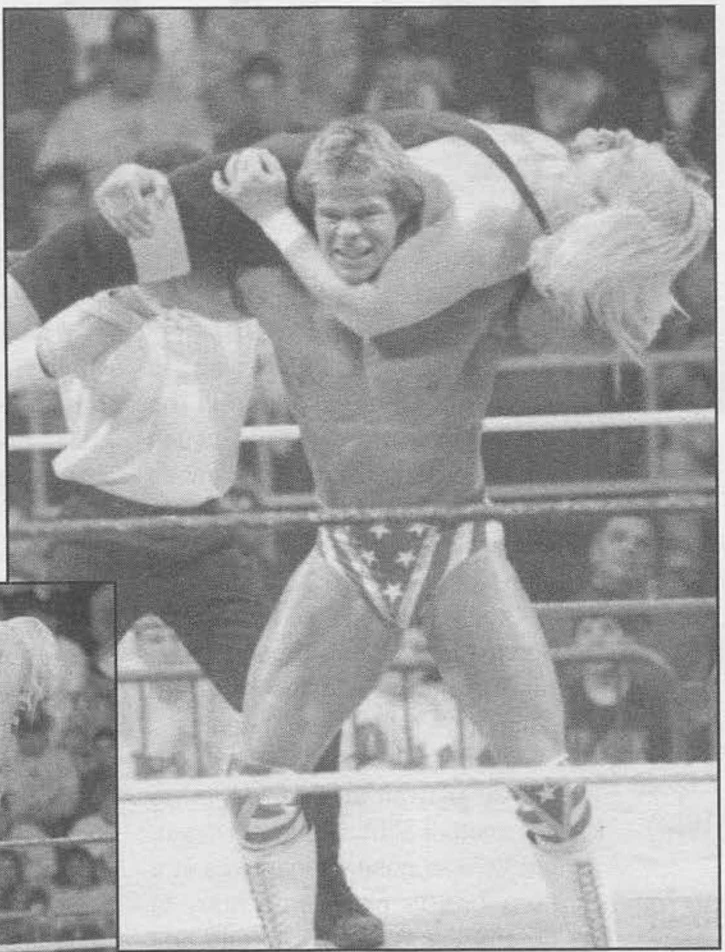
The only man who may be able to derail him is Skaaland, who could be close to returning to the sport as manager ... of Lex Luger.

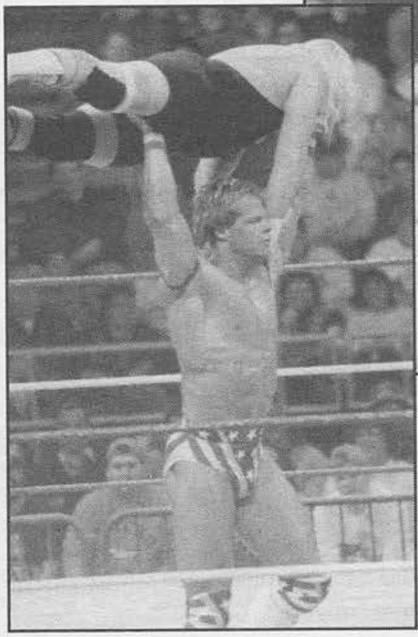
"Don't be surprised if he comes back," said one WWF fan favorite close to the situation. "That attack got Arnold's competitive juices flowing again. With the right wrestler and the right strategy, Skaaland could send Backlund back into retirement, where he belongs."

Why Luger? For a number of reasons. First of all, Luger remains one of the strongest and most talented wrestlers in the

WWF. Second, Luger is immensely popular with the fans, especially after turning his back on Ted DiBiase's dirty money and remaining a loyal fan favorite, a trait he had not exhibited earlier in his career.

But the most important reason may be motivation—for both men. Skaaland would like to teach Backlund a lesson in humility and respect. Luger would like to do the same; he could finally win the WWF World title in the process if Backlund has the belt. A recent match between the two saw Backlund put Luger in the chicken wing, only to be disqualified when Tatanka, looking for a piece of Luger himself, interfered on Backlund's behalf. Luger would like to even the score with Backlund, and Skaaland's wisdom could help him do it.





Luger would love to press Backlund over his head (left), then make him suffer in his "torture rack" (above). But Luger's main problem has been not wrestling smart in key matches. Skaaland could correct that—and perhaps get revenge on Backlund in the process.

Skaaland is one of the most successful manager of singles wrestlers in WWF history. Prior to Backlund's long reign as champion, Skaaland managed Bruno Sammartino, who held the WWF title for 11 of the WWF's first 14 years of existence. Both Backlund and Sammartino went years on end without losing, and Skaaland has to receive some of the credit for that success.

"Arnold Skaaland was a brilliant manager," said Pedro Morales, who held the WWF World title for nearly three years in the early-1970s. "He never let his wrestlers get too confident or too down on themselves. He kept them on an even keel, and that's why men like Bruno and Bob Backlund were champions for so long. Lots of managers know how to get to the top, but Arnold knew how to keep them there."

Right now, Skaaland might have a tough time getting a read on the way Backlund's mind is working, but he is totally aware of Backlund's physical strengths ... and his weaknesses. That knowledge could be the difference for Luger, who is an incredible physical specimen. Lex Luger often gets criticized for not using his head enough in the ring.

"Lex has always been stubborn, and Arnold's been away for a long time," said Greg Valentine, a former Backlund rival. "But if Skaaland can get him to think on the same page, they could beat Backlund. Heck, they could win the title."

THE WRESTLER has learned that Skaaland accompanied Luger to many recent WWF cards and that Skaaland has been with Luger during several intense workouts at gyms around the country.

If a deal is made, it would be remarkable redemption for Skaaland. Despite his managerial brilliance in leading Sammartino and Backlund to long title reigns, he has always been known as "the guy who threw in the towel." By guiding Luger to the title, he would complete a legendary three-peat and reserve a much more comfortable place in history for himself. □

HULK'S A

Big Van Vader is among the most ferocious men in wrestling, but he's the one who should be shaking in his boots right now. Hulk Hogan is on the rampage and Vader will be his next victim. Anybody for another retirement party?

By Craig Peters

MOMENTS BEFORE HIS Halloween Havoc match began, Hulk Hogan turned to "Mean" Gene Okerlund in the fan favorites' dressing room at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit and flashed what Okerlund called "the meanest look I've ever seen on the man's face."

Okerlund was taken by surprise again when Hogan brushed past him on his way to the ring and said, "Let's retire the bum tonight."

Okerlund, who has known the "Hulkster" well for years, tried to get another comment from Hogan, but he was gone. Hogan was in a hurry on this night—in a hurry to defend the WCW World title and retire Ric Flair.

He had a job to do. Hogan's intentions weren't merely to send Flair into retirement, but to make him feel as if there was no other option. From the opening bell to the final slap of the mat by guest referee Mr. T, Hogan unleashed a relentless assault on the 10-time former world champion. They battled on top of the cage as Flair hung precariously with his gut hanging over the railing. Hogan pounded Flair with feet and fists, and, at one point, he seemed to take a bite out of Flair's forehead. No! That couldn't have happened!

"He wrestled like I thought he would from the moment he said that thing to me about retiring Flair," Okerlund said. "Hulk has always been a comeback wrestler and people have accused him of being a little lazy in the ring, but on that night, he wrestled all-out from the start. We saw what could happen if Hogan took his killer instinct—which usually flares up for only a few seconds in a match—and spread it out over the entire evening. He was unbeatable that night. He was absolutely devastating."

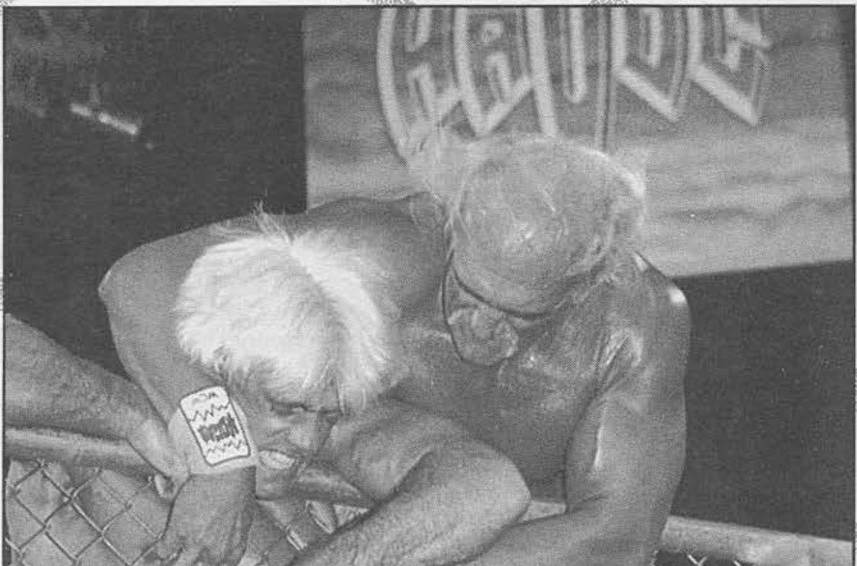
Devastating to Flair, who limped sorely into retirement, and devastating for Sherri Martel, who was slapped and thrown around by the usually gentlemanly "Hulkster." Hogan often swore he would never hit a woman, but he did on this night. He hit anything that moved.

With Flair permanently out of the picture and Brutus Beefcake not expected to pose a serious threat to his former friend, it looks like three-time former WCW World champion Big Van Vader is next on Hogan's list. Most people—including Harley Race, Vader's

Photos by Brad McFarlin & John S. Pithers

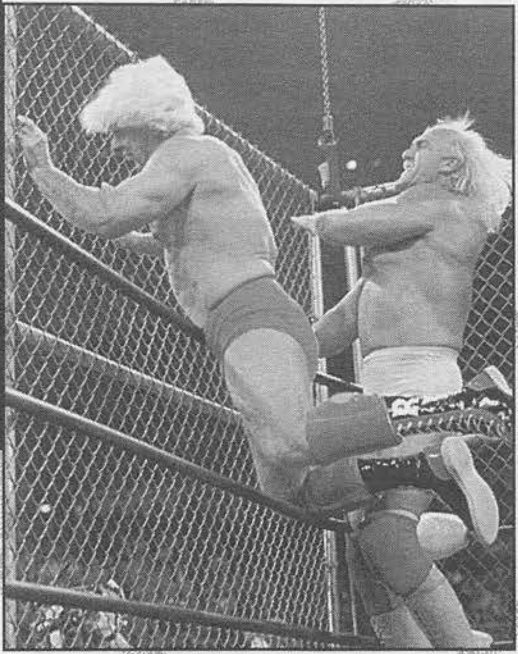
MANIAC!

Why Vader Should Be Deathly Afraid Of Hogan



This isn't the gentle Hulk Hogan people know and love. He was relentless in the steel cage match against Ric Flair. Not only did he battle Flair at the top of the cage, he choked him on a metal bar!

As the match progressed, Hogan seemed to get angrier and angrier. He gouged the "Nature Boy's" eyes (above) and really looked like he enjoyed throwing Flair face-first into the steel mesh (right). Does Big Van Vader really want a piece of such a monster?



manager—feel that will spell doom for Hogan as he faces a bigger, stronger, more ferocious wrestler for the first time in WCW.

Vader has been known to seriously injure his opponents and end careers—and laugh about it afterward.

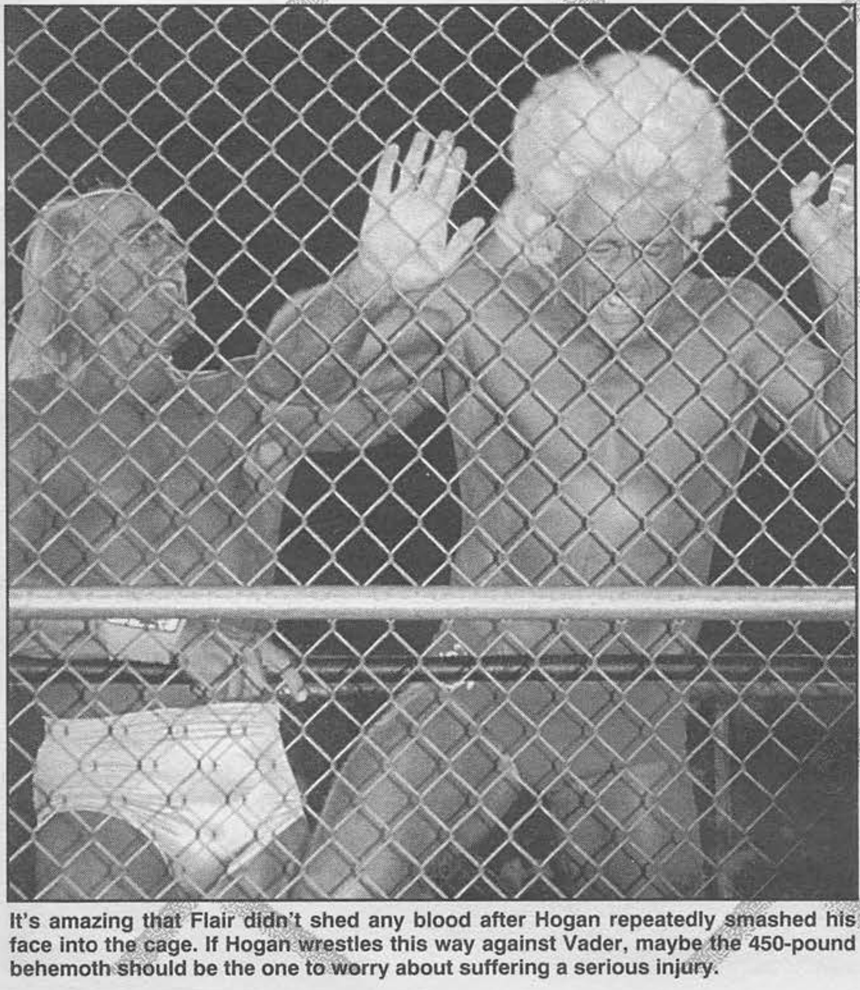
"He must have the hardest hands in the world, and I mean that," said Sting, who has faced Vader many times during the last few years. "When he hits you, you know you've been hit, even if it's just a slap across the face. He's so powerful that a tap becomes a thud."

Race accused Hogan of ducking Vader prior to Halloween Havoc. In the days afterward, Race vowed that his man would "make it so that Hogan wished he was the one who retired at Halloween Havoc. There's no description for the pain he's about to feel."

Race savored the thought. Vader has been working out with a punching bag that has Hogan's likeness on it. According to insiders, Vader is working on a special version of his power bomb just for Hogan. It begs the question: Is Race working on a new way to pull aside the padding on the arena floor, which is exactly what he did on April 21, 1993, before Vader nearly power-bombed Cactus Jack into permanent retirement?

Vader is pouring all of his energies into destroying Hogan. But if he watched the Flair-Hogan match at Halloween Havoc, there'd be something else floating around his mind: ways to avoid getting killed by Hogan.

Hogan showed a new side of himself at Halloween Havoc and there's every reason to believe he liked that side. The experts always thought a Hogan-Vader match would be all Vader. The decision



It's amazing that Flair didn't shed any blood after Hogan repeatedly smashed his face into the cage. If Hogan wrestles this way against Vader, maybe the 450-pound behemoth should be the one to worry about suffering a serious injury.

would rest on whether Vader could execute a finishing maneuver, or whether Hogan would take advantage of one mistake and turn it into a bodyslam-clothesline-legdrop-pin combination victory, as he has on hundreds of other occasions.

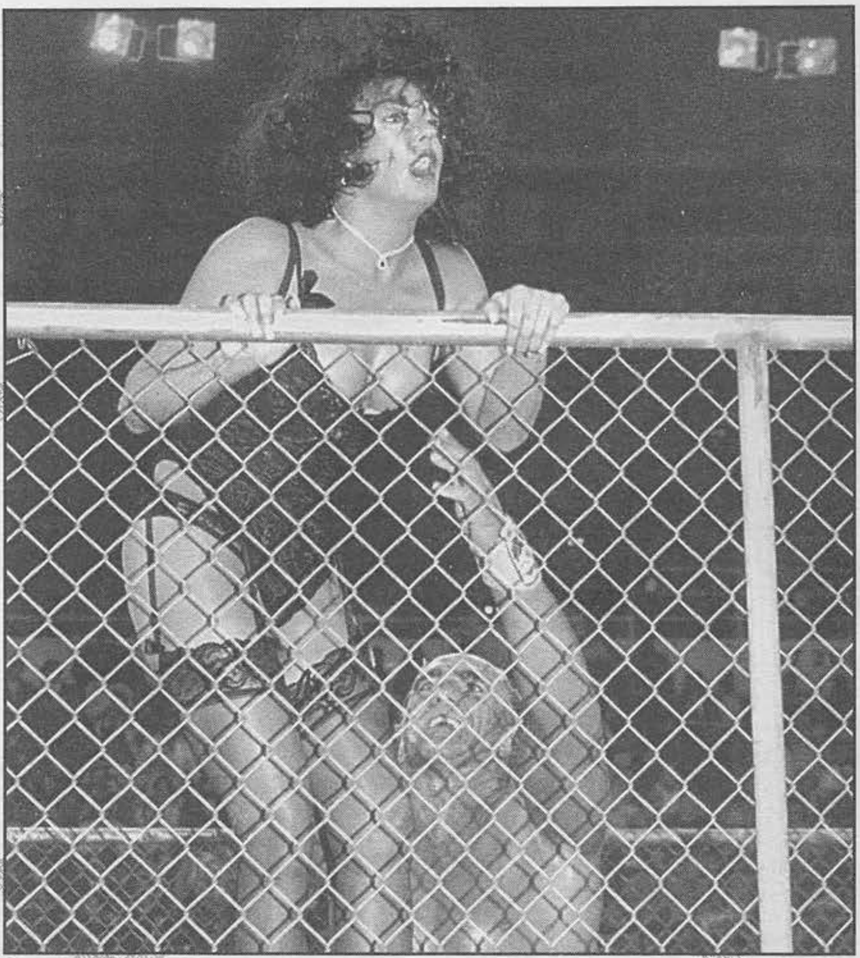
Scratch that thought. Based on new information, Vader-Hogan looks like a war from the opening bell with both of these powerful men tearing into each other with reckless abandon. The winner will be the man left standing. Past performance says not to bet against Hogan, who makes fewer mistakes and has lost far less often than Vader.

"It's something I want to see," said Bobby Heenan, who clearly favors Vader. "I still think, despite what happened at Halloween Havoc, that Vader will destroy Hogan and send him into retirement. It won't be pretty, either. People have been down on Vader, but nobody's gotten the best of him. The way I see it, the body ledger reads Vader 586, Everybody Else 0, and it's going to stay that way."

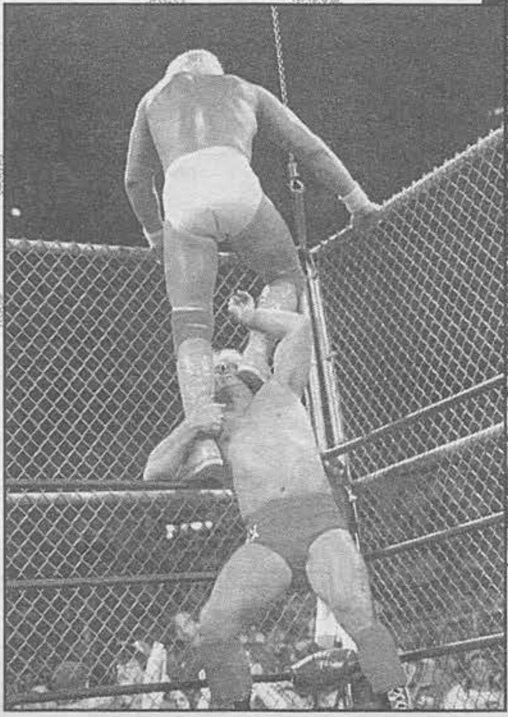
Race claims he sees nothing new to fear in Hogan. Vader was asked if he's afraid of Hogan. He grabbed a reporter's notebook and tore it to shreds. Then he ripped the cassette out of the reporter's tape recorder and crushed it under his right boot.

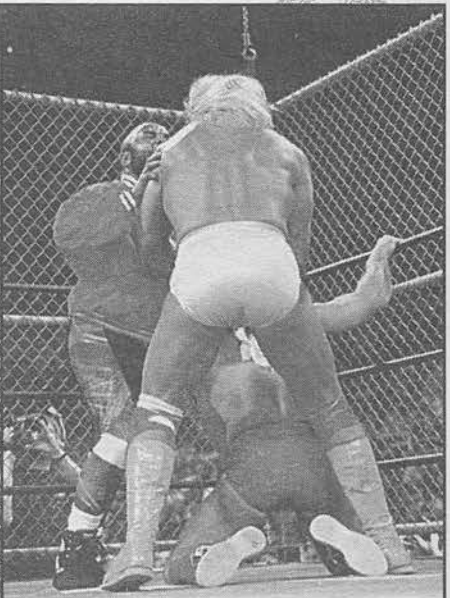
"That answer your question, wimp?" Vader said.

But as a famous recent movie character said, "Stupid is as stupid does." Not respecting Hogan might be the stupidest thing Vader has ever done. □

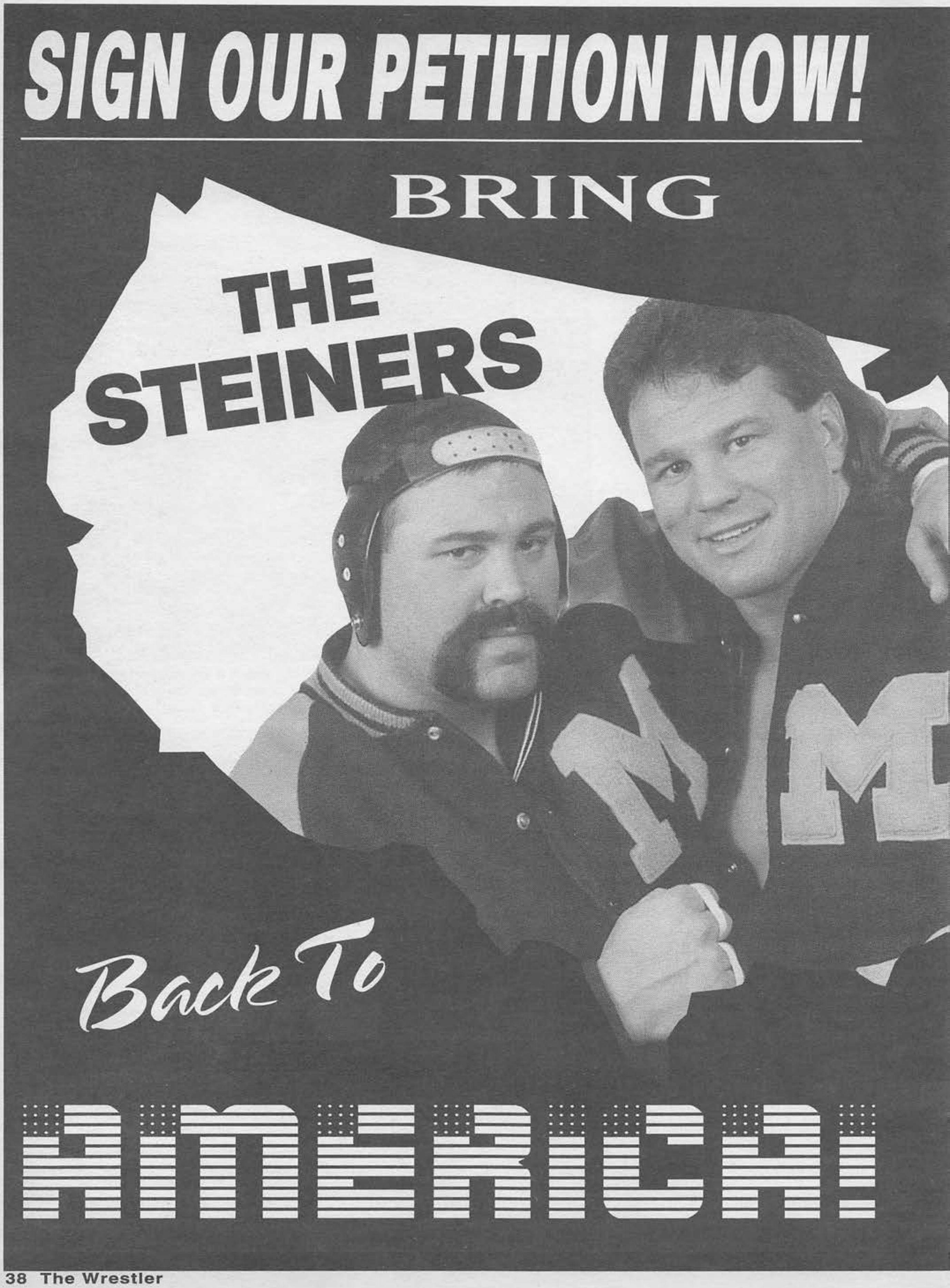


Sherri Martel might not act very ladylike, but she is a woman and Hogan once said he didn't hit women. He bodyslammed and clotheslined Sherri several times in this bout. There's no telling how bad he might want to hurt Vader.





Hogan had a few chances to escape the cage early in the match, but he preferred to wait and choke Flair with his boots (left). Even his good friend Mr. T (above) wasn't able to stop him from attacking Flair with such a vengeance.


SIGN OUR PETITION NOW!
BRING
THE STEINERS
Back To
AMERICA!

By Andy Rodriguez

THEY DON'T LIKE the food. They don't like the nightlife. They don't even like the weather.

So why are the Steiners still in Japan?

"We needed a change of pace," said Scott. "Seems in the States, everybody always wanted a piece of us. The promoters, the wrestlers, the fans; we were always being hounded for one reason or another. Here, the people know us, but it isn't that crazy. We can be more relaxed."

"Yeah," added older brother Rick. "It's a whole other world!"

A world in which the Steiners apparently feel very comfortable. When they left the U.S. for Japan several months ago, Rick and Scott did not plan to remain in the island nation for very long. Now, the greatest tag team of their generation seems to be in no hurry to return to their home country.

That may be great for the Steiners. For most fans of tag team wrestling, though, it stinks. Those fans have a message for Rick and Scott:

Come back—*please!*

"It isn't the same without them," argued Perry Hammer of Marietta, Georgia. "It just isn't the same."

Why isn't it the same?

A look at the top 10 tag teams, as rated in a recent edition of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly,* offers a good reason why the fans feel the way they do.

At number one were Marcus Bagwell and The Patriot, the former WCW World tag team champions. While Bagwell and Patriot are fine athletes, they have not been a team for long. And in the wake of their loss, it remains to be seen how long they stick together.

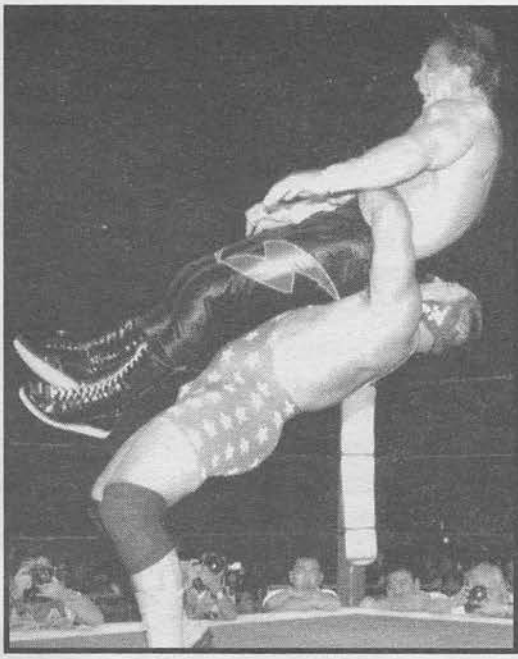
The WWF tag titlists, Diesel and Shawn Michaels, are all the way down at number four. Far from being a solid duo, Diesel and Michaels despise each other. Besides, Diesel has been more concerned with pursuing the Intercontinental belt.

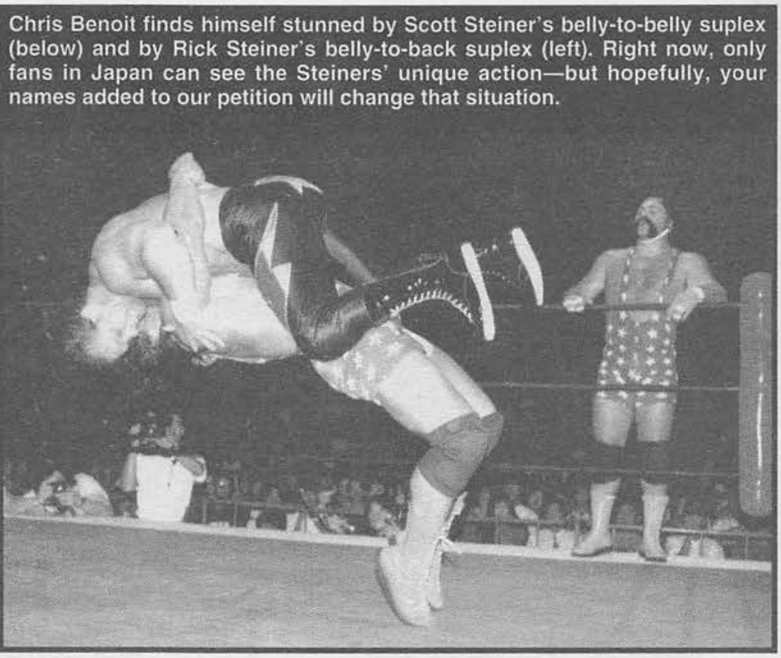
WCW World tag champs Paul Orndorff and Paul Roma were on the list, of course. And while both are great competitors, they, like Bagwell and Patriot, are relatively inexperienced together.

The rest of the field offers those whose better days have past—The Bushwhackers and The Rock 'n' Roll Express—or those who have yet to attain their potential—The Gangstas, PG-13, and Public Enemy. Only The Nasty Boys, rated second, are a bonafide top 10 duo.

The quality of tag team wrestling in the U.S. went way down when Rick & Scott Steiner left the States for Japan. If you think the brother duo should return to America, let your voice be heard now! Otherwise, they may *never* return!

"Clearly, it is not a strong field," offered Paul Ellering, who managed what many consider to be the greatest team ever, The Road Warriors. "Of course, that isn't the





Chris Benoit finds himself stunned by Scott Steiner's belly-to-belly suplex (below) and by Rick Steiner's belly-to-back suplex (left). Right now, only fans in Japan can see the Steiners' unique action—but hopefully, your names added to our petition will change that situation.

fault of the teams themselves. They're doing the best they can. It's really indicative of the tag team scene in general. If these fellows are the top 10, what does that say for the top 50, or even the top 20?"

Not much, unfortunately. The tag scene is as weak as it's been in many years. Certainly, there are a lot of reasons for that. Undoubtedly, one is the Steiners' absence.

"First of all," said Ellering, "night after night the people got to see one of the best damned teams around. Those boys are incredible. Scott's 'Frankensteiner,' for example, is an amazing move. They're both tremendous athletes, and their teamwork is peerless. Naturally, I'm not telling you what every fan hasn't known for years."

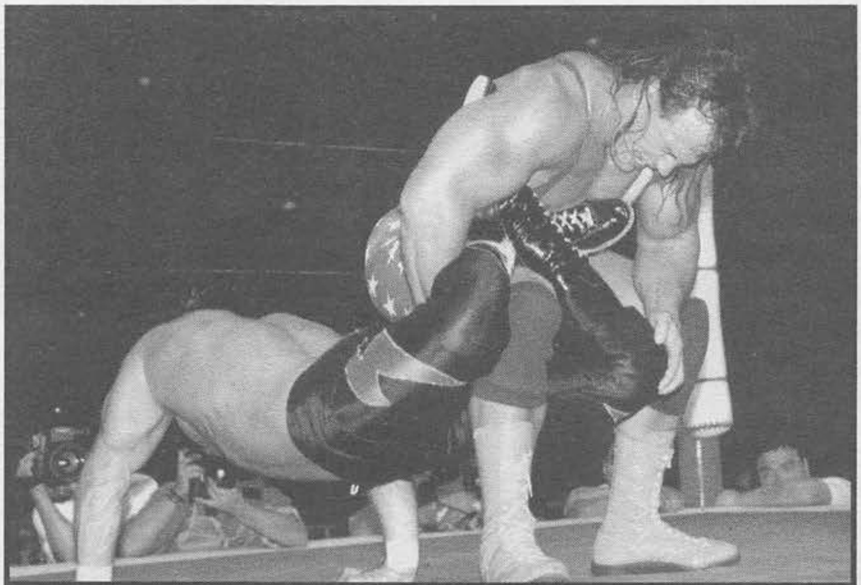
More evidence of their excellence: They are one of the few teams to have won both the WCW and WWF World tag team titles. Ellering's Warriors were also one of the few.

"Just as importantly," Ellering continued, "they make every team around them better. These other guys want to keep up with the Steiners, so they work harder and get better. Whether they know it or not, they're pushed to a higher level. Let me tell you, even Hawk and Animal were motivated by the Steiners. They offer a goal for which others strive."

That goal no longer exists. To be sure, there is competition; it's just not as intense as it once was.

"Yeah, I have to admit that," said Brian Knobs of The Nasty Boys. "I don't care much for the Steiners, but they always gave us trouble. Always. If they had the belts, we might actually have something to worry about."

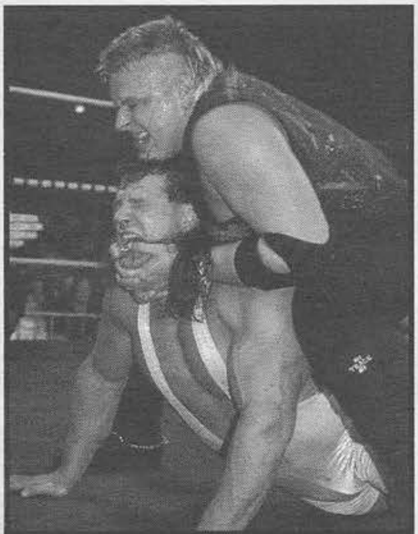
Knobs' compliment is echoed in locker rooms throughout North America. The sport's athletes respect the Steiners, and even miss them. But not as much as the fans do.



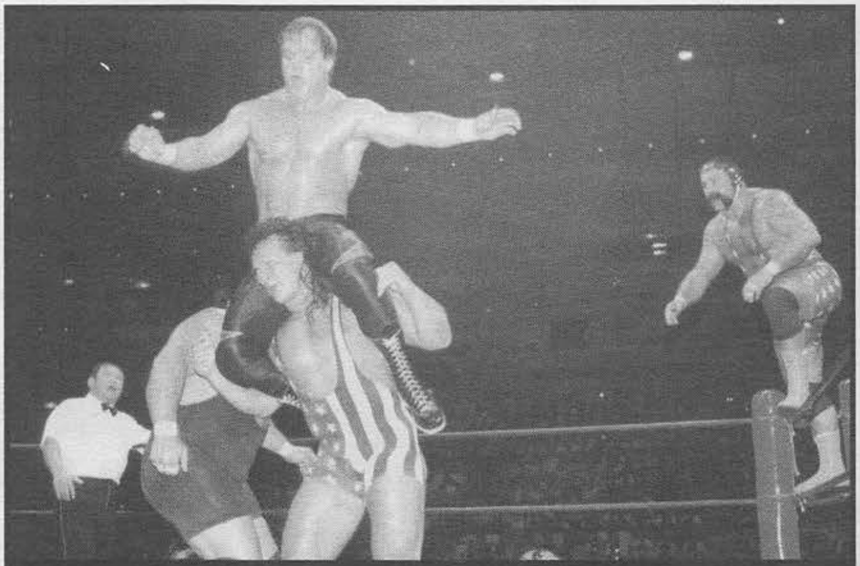
Scott Steiner's variation on the "Scorpion deathlock" would normally lead to a submission, but Chris Benoit is—remarkably—able to power out of the move. Would most of today's WWF and WCW tag competitors be able to do the same?

"I can understand them touring Japan," said Cary Newhouse, member of a Steiners fan club in Toronto. "They've done that before. But why are they staying so long? The wrestling in Japan is good, but is it *that* good? Isn't this where the action is?"

There's plenty of action in Japan, too. Funny thing is, the Steiners aren't in the midst of much of it. They are not even competing that often. Teams like Chris Benoit and Scott Norton offer tough competition, but otherwise Rick and Scott are on a fairly easy schedule.



Nasty Boy Brian Knobs (rear-chin-locking Scott) admits that having the Steiners in the same federation as them improves the overall state of tag team wrestling.



Rick goes to the top to clothesline Benoit (who wrestles in Japan as The Pegasus Kid). This stunning finishing maneuver can once again thrill U.S. fans—if you let your voice be heard!

"Hey, my brother and I deserve a break!" Scott insisted. "We're not doing a damned thing wrong! We'll do what we want when we want."

Scott sounds combative, but really, he's a good guy. He'll listen to reason. He'll listen to the fans.

We hope.

Sign our petition. Let him know you want him and Rick back in WCW, or the WWF, or anywhere in North America. Tell them you're hungry for the action only they can provide.

Tell them to get off their butts!

ADD YOUR NAME TO OUR PETITION! ADD YOUR NAME TO THE GROWING CHORUS OF VOICES DEMANDING THAT THE STEINERS RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES! *THE WRESTLER* WILL PACKAGE ALL THE PETITION SLIPS AND LETTERS WE RECEIVE AND FORWARD THEM TO RICK AND SCOTT IN JAPAN! LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

☐ YES! I want to add my name to the petition! Please, Steiners: Come back to the United States—NOW!

Name______________________________

Address______________________________

City______________________________

State______________________________ Zip______________

Mail to:

Steiners Petition
c/o The Wrestler
P.O. Box 1148
Ft. Washington, PA 19040

Patriot's Treasonous Message To Bagwell:

By Brandi Mankiewicz

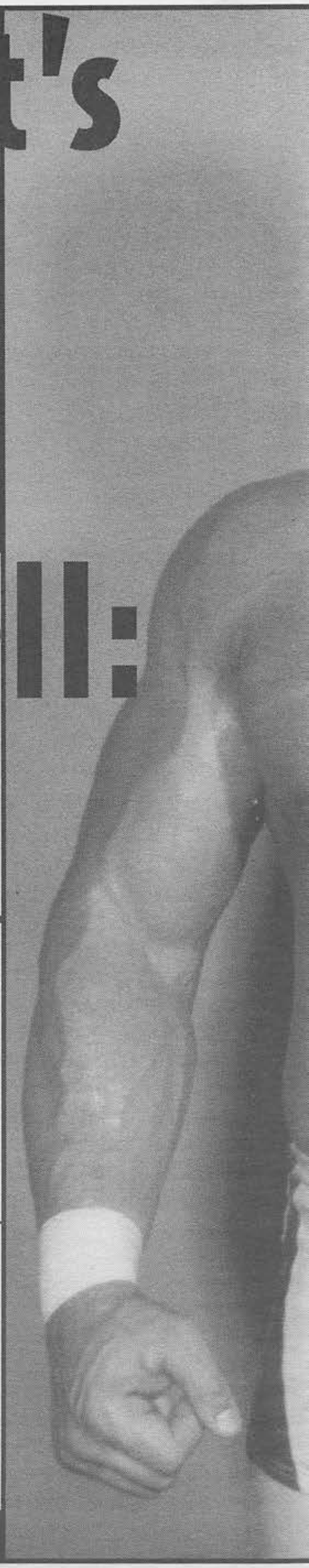
The frustration is mounting for Patriot and Marcus Bagwell. With a disappointing loss still on his mind, Patriot considered his options for the future. Is it time for him to find a new partner? The insights into Patriot's thoughts are fascinating!

THE PATRIOT TURNED his back to the interviewer and made sure there were no mirrors on the vanity in front of him. Then, with two quick motions, he pulled off his sweat-soaked mask—revealing the back of a healthy head of hair—and pulled on a clean one. He turned around, smiled through his mask, and played the part of the courteous host. It came naturally.

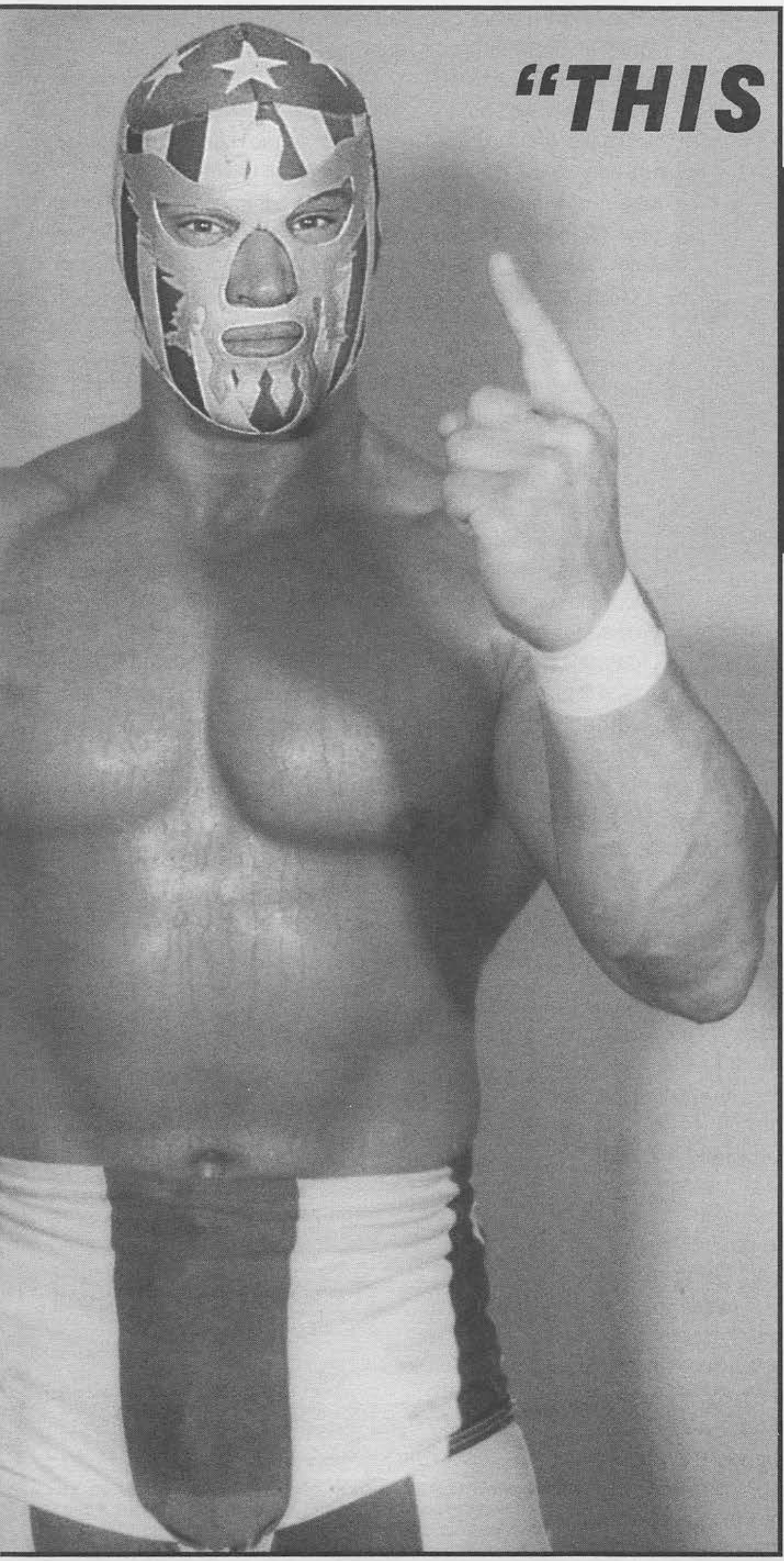
"Now," Patriot asked. "What can I do for you?"

It was difficult to tell if the smile was real or forced, because Patriot could not have been in a good mood. Two days earlier at Halloween Havoc in Detroit, Patriot and Marcus Alexander Bagwell lost the WCW World tag team title to Paul Orndorff and Paul Roma when Roma pinned Bagwell. It ended a 28-day title reign for the all-American team.

Shortly after Havoc, Patriot and Bagwell began to regroup and get ready for another assault on Roma and Orndorff. Their goal: regain the belts as quickly as possible. But there was a lot on Patriot's mind, and the question really wasn't what could Patriot do for the reporter, but rather what the reporter



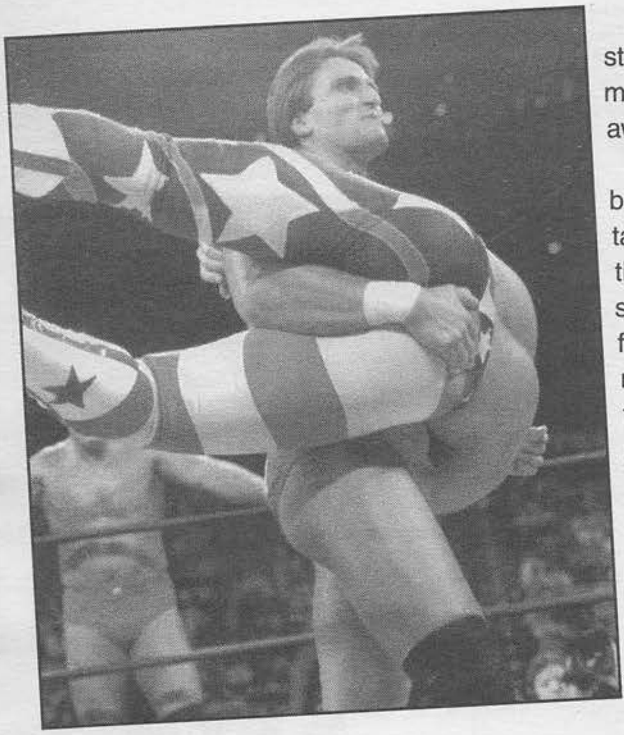
Photos by Brad McFarlin



"THIS TEAM'S NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR BOTH OF US!"

could do for Patriot.

"I'm all right," he said. "Thanks for asking. You just can't understand how helpless you feel when you watch your partner get pinned and lose something you worked so hard for, and you're not able to do anything about it. That's the problem with tag teams, and it's the reason I've always preferred one-on-one competition. Unfortunately, it's very crowded at the top in WCW these days, and the quickest way to get ahead is to wrestle tag teams."



Paul Roma gets ready to bodyslam The Patriot. The masked man is confident that he and Marcus Bagwell can recapture the WCW World tag team title, but he is alarmed by what he thinks is negative thinking on the part of his teammate.

Was Patriot saying he regretted teaming with Bagwell?

"I'm not saying anything," Patriot replied. "Bags is a good guy. It's just that, well, there are a lot of choices in this federation, a lot of potential partners, and a lot of things for me to think about. Right now, a lot of things are going through my mind, which is too bad, because the only thing I should be thinking about is regaining those belts. But I don't know. I hope Bags isn't trying to do too much. If he is, we'll have a big problem."

Patriot dropped his weary body into the leather couch in the fan favorites' lounge at WCW headquarters in Atlanta and thought for a moment. His silence was broken by Bagwell, who bounded through the door with a big announcement.

"Buddy, you're not going to believe the good news!" he exclaimed. "We just signed for three more matches against Roma and Orndorff!"

Patriot didn't react. He stared at Bagwell for a moment, then turned away. Finally, he spoke.

"That's great, Bags, but why don't we just take it one match at a time for now?" Patriot said. "Besides, you're forgetting: When we regain those belts, that's just gonna mean more rematches for Roma and Orndorff. You know, Bags, you have to think about those things."

Bagwell's reaction was fascinating. A look of surprise, then disappointment, then despair crossed his face. He turned and, without saying a word, left the room. There was an uncomfortable, pregnant pause before Patriot spoke up again.

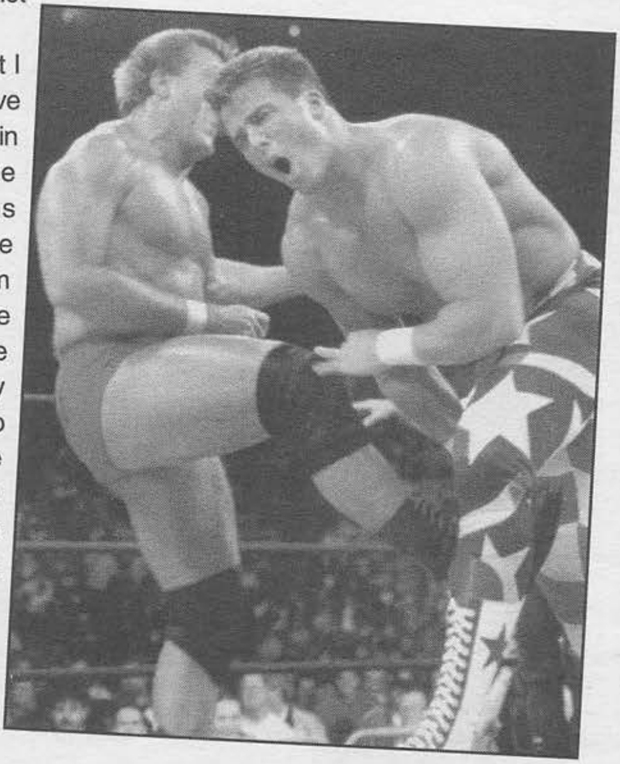
"See, that's just what I mean," Patriot said. "I've always been a believer in the power of positive thinking, but Bags doesn't think along those lines. I keep telling him that it only took us one match to win those belts, and it would only take us one match to lose them. Now I have to remind him that it's only going to take us one match to get them back. I can't worry about how many times we're going to wrestle Roma and Orndorff. To me, one chance is enough, and it's as much as we have the right to ask for. There are other good tag teams out there gunning for shots, too.

"You know," Patriot continued. "Bagwell's negative thinking is starting to get to me. Maybe it's time for me to consider my options again."

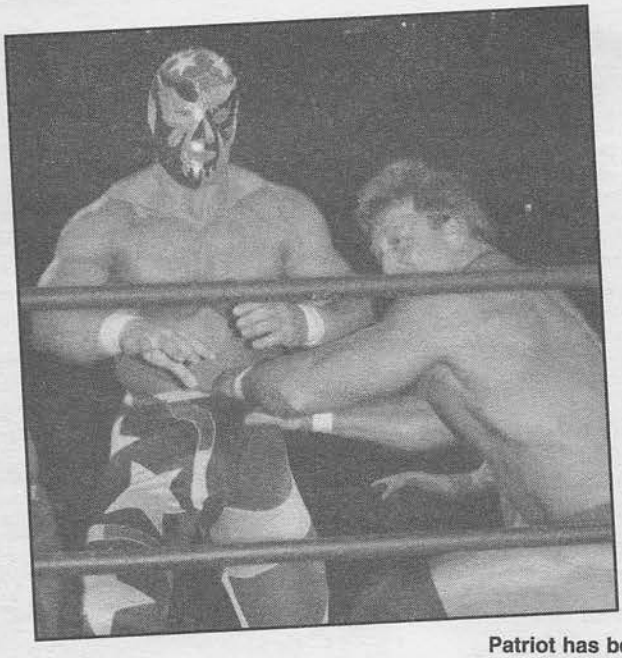
That last comment, if spoken in a room full of reporters, would have been met by shouting questions and writers dropping their notebooks to call their editors. But Patriot was one-on-one with the reporter, and his comment had time to sink in. Another question wasn't even asked before Patriot continued.

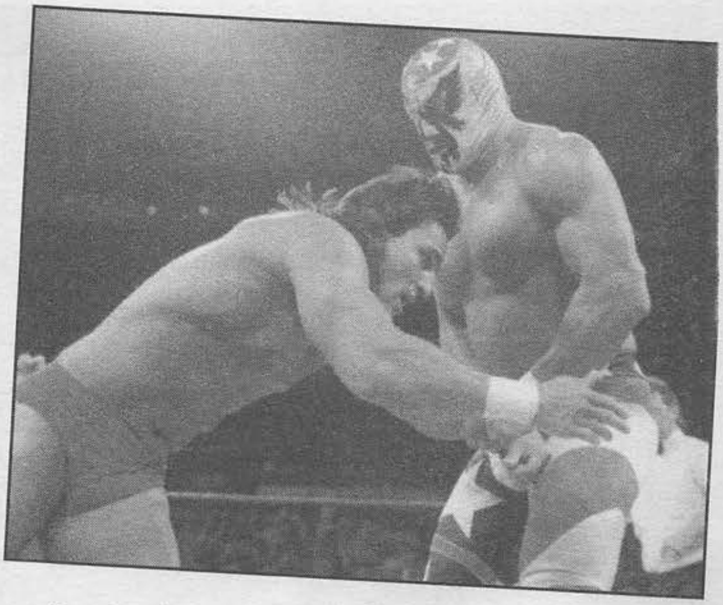
"I just have to wonder. Maybe this team isn't big enough for both of us," he said. "We're too different. Sure, we have similar styles, but we're cut from a different mold. I like to do things with a plan, then follow that plan to the letter. Bags is always trying to improvise, and it gets us into trouble. That's why we lost the belts."

There is a perfect soulmate for



Bagwell feels the pain of a Paul Orndorff knee at Halloween Havoc. He could find himself without a tag team partner soon if Patriot decides to go solo or find a partner who better complements his style and attitude.

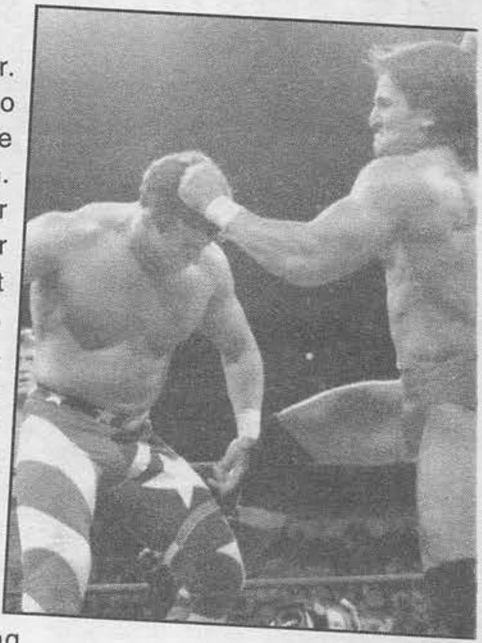




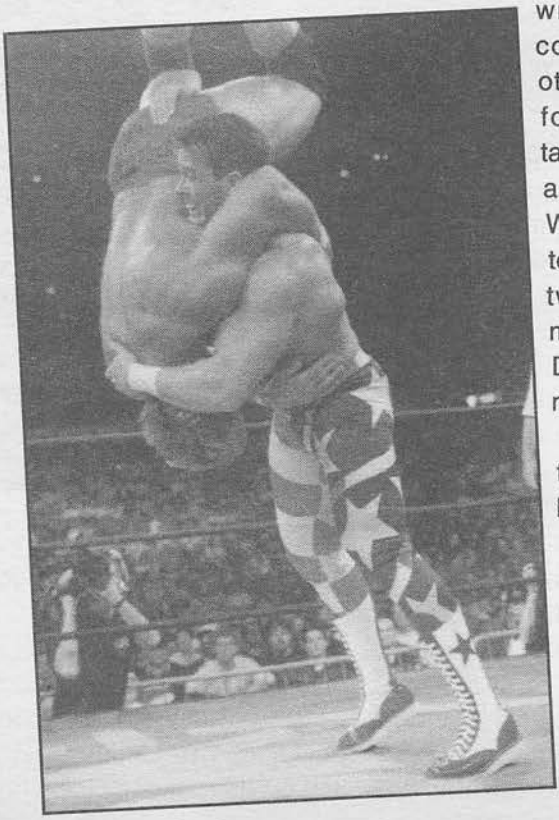
Patriot has been able to handle both Orndorff (left) and Roma (right) in most matches. He has his doubts, however, as to whether Bagwell is fully committed to the good of the team.

Patriot in WCW. Hacksaw Duggan, another man who places love of country above everything else, has told reporters that he'd like the chance to team with Patriot, thus forming the ultimate patriotic tag team. Patriot was asked if he'd be willing to team with Duggan.

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves," Patriot said. "Marcus Alexander Bagwell is my partner. But I can see your point. Two patriots, two people who love America. Yeah, it could be fun. The fans would be waving their flags, and we'd be wrestling for our country, instead of the way it is now, where one man is wrestling for his country and the other is wrestling for himself. I've talked to Hacksaw a couple of times. We worked out together once or twice, but nothing more than that. Don't get ahead of me here."



Bagwell has had some trouble with Roma during recent matches and he may soon find himself without a partner because of it. Patriot has often wondered what it would be like to have a partner who also wrestles for his country, like Hacksaw Duggan.

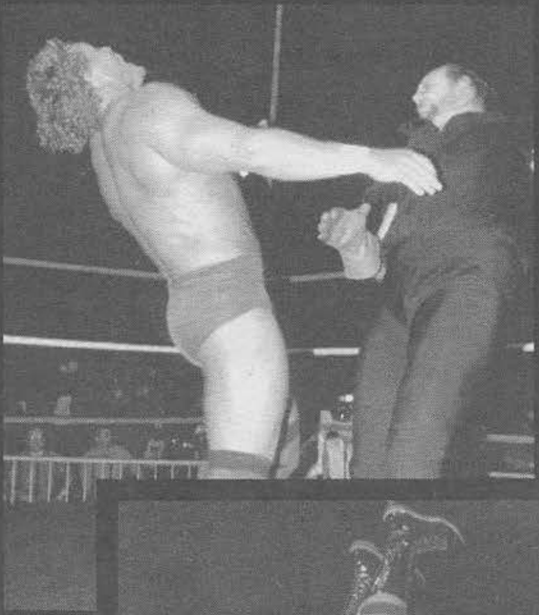


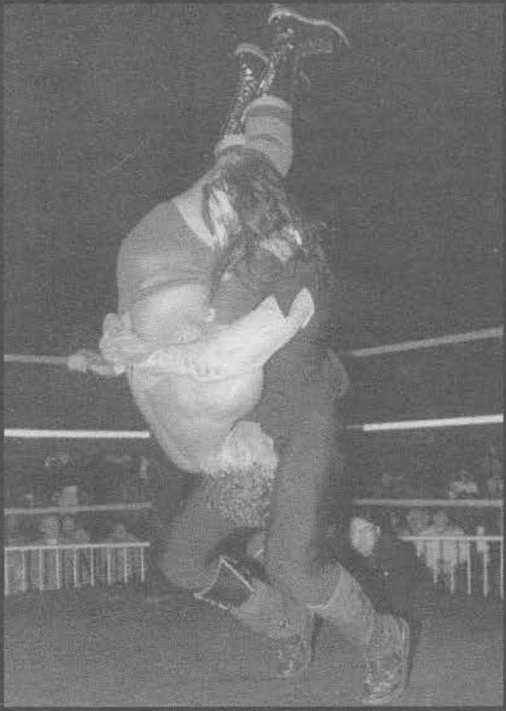
Bagwell's strength and enthusiasm have made him a successful and popular tag team wrestler in WCW, but Patriot has hinted that he thinks Bagwell can be a bit selfish at times.

Patriot was told that he sounded bitter and angry, and that those two emotions didn't look good on him. He didn't answer. Instead, he stood up and turned on the TV set, then used the remote control to flick on the VCR.

Halloween Havoc was playing on tape. As if Patriot needed any more to think about. □

UNDERTAKER OVERWHELMING! SID VICIOUS' NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE





By the time the Undertaker-Sid Vicious match was drawing to a close, Sid had no idea how to counter his bizarre foe's offense. A chop to the throat sent him reeling (above) and Undertaker nearly took the USWA title after a devastating "tombstone" piledriver (right).

Photos by Scott George

By Dave Rosenbaum

VINCE MCMAHON WAS salivating. Thousands of miles away, the WWF head was sitting at the broadcast table for another night of *WWF Monday Night Raw*, but he had to be thinking about a match that was taking place that very night in Memphis, Tennessee. Sid Vicious vs. The Undertaker. To fans, it sounds like a WrestleMania main event. To the head of the WWF, it sounds like a cash register ringing.

What's a USWA card without Jerry Lawler, Brian Christopher, or Jeff Jarrett? On this night, it was a card that drew one of the biggest crowds of the year to the Mid-South Coliseum for a battle that Vicious will never forget. The USWA heavyweight champion put both his belt and his life on the line against The Undertaker and Memphis might never be the same.

Neither will Vicious, who looked into the face of death and saw himself mirrored in the Undertaker's eyes. Cornered by reporters afterward in a dark corner of the Coliseum, Vicious was visibly shaken. His face was ashen.

"No comment," he barked to a reporter who asked him about the match.

"Were you afraid?" a reporter in the back of the group dared ask Vicious.

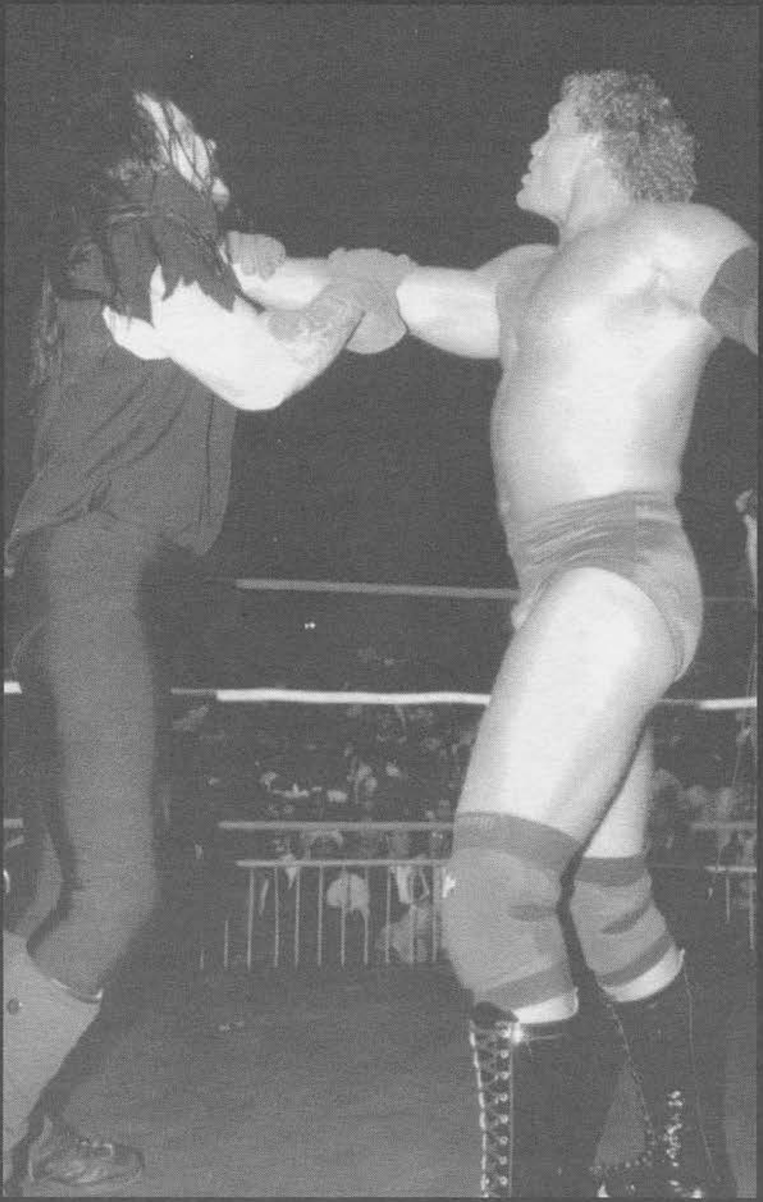
"Who asked that?" Vicious hollered, refusing to give an answer. He huffed off into the dressing room and every reporter heard the click of the door locking.

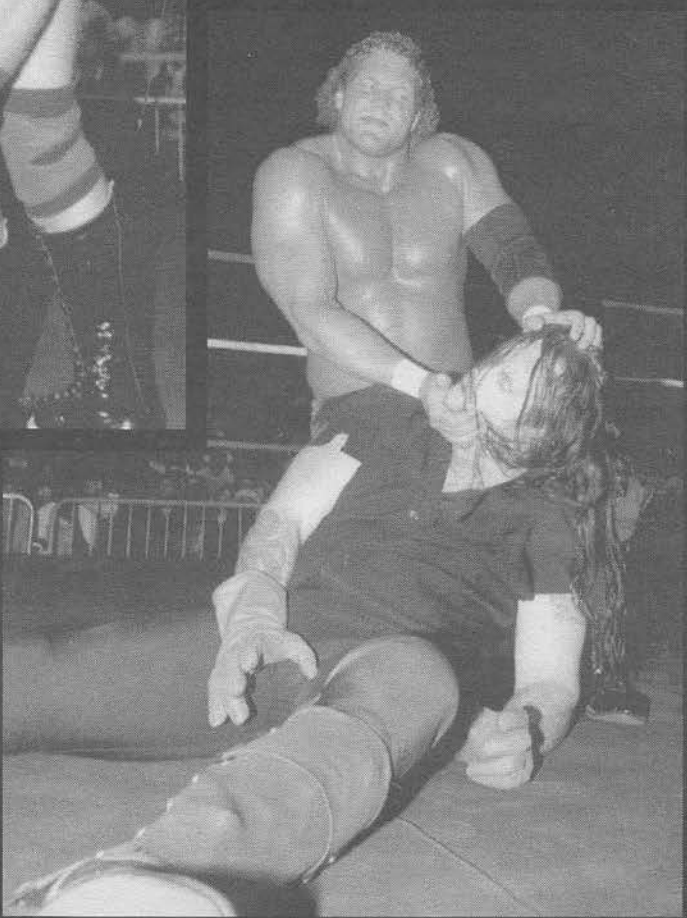
But death had the key.

Down the hallway, one USWA favorite put it all in perspective.

"Now Sid Vicious knows the power of The Undertaker," said Jeff Gaylord. "I don't think he ever

Sid Vicious was strutting around the USWA with an air of invincibility about him until The Undertaker came along. An all-out assault couldn't stop Undertaker and now Vicious is wondering if the man he faced that night is really a man at all





Vicious choke-slammed Undertaker once, but he wasn't able to repeat the feat here. Undertaker was on the verge of another unbelievable comeback, and that didn't bode well for Sid!

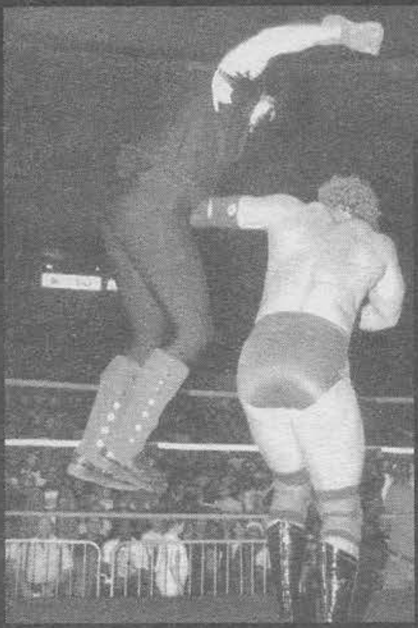
wants to know it again. I don't blame him!"

Gaylord shuddered and looked to the heavens.

"Where's Undertaker?" a reporter asked.

"Nobody knows," Gaylord answered mysteriously.

They had met before—under



Sid tried everything he knew and still couldn't post a win. He attempted to block Undertaker's top-rope assault (left), but was unsuccessful. Later he tried wrenching his opponent's neck (below), but Undertaker kept fighting back.

Undertaker and Vicious had many staredowns and many brutal matches when they feuded a few years ago in the WWF (below). But Vicious had to be plenty frightened after their meeting in Memphis this fall.

different circumstances. It was back in 1991-92 in the WWF, when Sid Vicious was Sid Justice and The Undertaker was one of the most hated men in any federation. Sid won many of those matches, but quite a bit has happened since. Undertaker now has a faithful following and he has gotten harder and harder to beat.

Still, Sid Vicious is one of the most powerful and dangerous men in wrestling. It's a widely accepted fact that a Vicious power bomb, when properly executed, will leave an opponent motionless and completely unable to continue. It's the supreme finishing move because Vicious never needs a followup; all he has to do his cover his opponent for the pin, and he can take as long as he pleases to do that. The opponent is going nowhere.

That's not what happened this time. With a little more than five minutes gone in their match, Vicious grabbed Undertaker by the throat, lifted him high above the ring, and choke-slammed him to the mat. Undertaker hit the mat with a sickening thud, as if a slab of brick had just struck against a solid metal wall. Undertaker lay motionless.

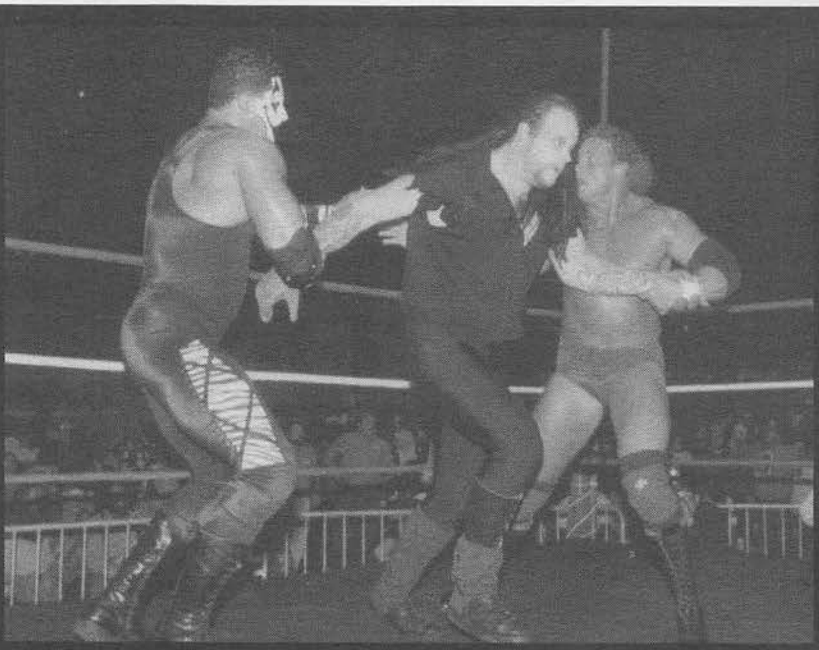
Vicious paraded around the ring and soaked in the crowd's boos. He wouldn't have believed what was going on behind him.

Undertaker and Hulk Hogan

have something in common. No matter how many times they come back, no matter how many times Hogan calls upon the crowd to raise his adrenaline level, and no matter how many times Undertaker comes back from the dead in a match, it's always exciting and surprising when it happens. When Undertaker suddenly sat up, the entire crowd at Mid-South Coliseum gasped, then cheered wildly.

Vicious, finally realizing that something had gone terribly wrong, turned around. He had time to execute another slam, but the damage was done. Vicious couldn't recover from the shock he had received.

He kept throwing everything he had at Undertaker. At one point, Sid slammed Undertaker's head into the ring apron. Nothing happened. He hit Undertaker across the back with a metal chair. Undertaker recovered. Kicks and clotheslines had little impact. You can't kill a dead man. Then he showered Undertaker with a series of closed-fist punches and kicks that seemed to wear him down.



Spellbinder ultimately interfered in the match and got Vicious disqualified, but Undertaker easily handled their double-team assault. Will Sid ever be the same after this near-death experience?

Vicious won many of his matches against Undertaker in the WWF, but their careers have gone in different directions since that feud. Undertaker has become even more intimidating, while Sid is still in search of respect.

Guess again.

Undertaker drew upon the crowd's energy and lifted Vicious for his "tombstone" piledriver. This time, Vicious bore the brunt of head against solid object.

Who knows what would have happened had Spellbinder, Vicious' sidekick, not run into the ring and broken up Undertaker's attempted pinfall. They made a foolhardy attempt at double-teaming Undertaker, who fought back with all the calm of a cold-blooded man. His lesson for the night was done.

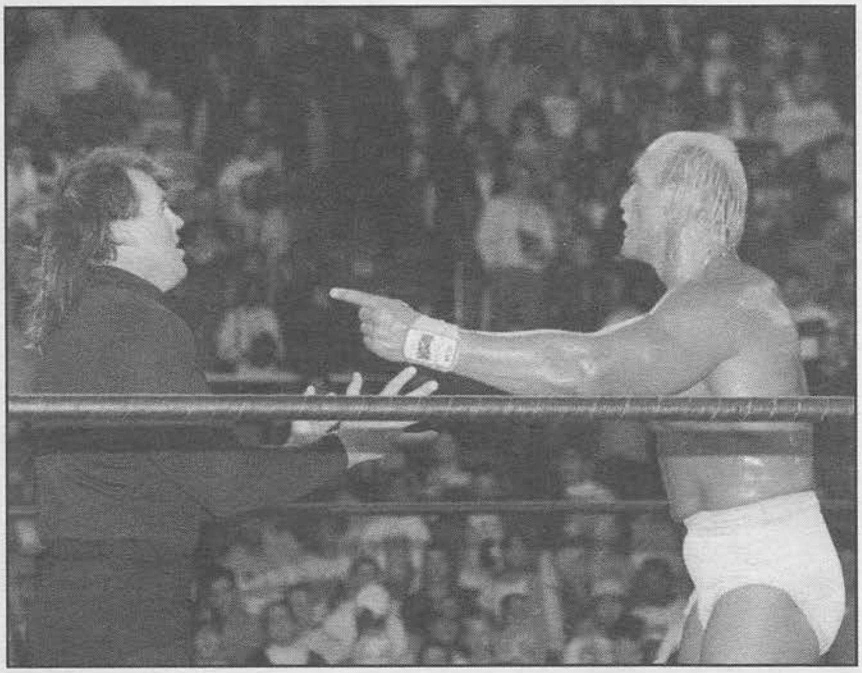
But how about Vicious? How will he recover from this match? In hockey, there's a saying that a goon who is beaten is no longer a goon; he completely loses his confidence and his aura of invincibility. Undertaker stripped down Vicious for all of the fans and USWA wrestlers to see. Just when it looked as if Vicious was on the verge of another career breakthrough, Undertaker forced him to take a step backward. The mental damage, however, was far greater than the career damage.

Vicious says he'll be all right. But you don't see him asking for a rematch. Not in this lifetime. It'll take all of McMahon's money to get Vicious and Undertaker back into the ring.

Even that might not be enough. □

NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)



Show no sympathy to Hulk Hogan because he was betrayed by Brutus Beefcake, says Dave Rosenbaum. He argues that Hogan has a history of using his friends. He also says Beefcake deserves to be booed because he is a lousy wrestler.

GUT REACTION: As a wrestler, "The Barber" was always a butcher. But I was surprised that it was Beefcake because the masked man didn't seem to have any of his characteristics.

INFORMED REACTION: There were two masked men all along and Beefcake wasn't the one who emerged from under the ring. "The Barber" was always a butcher of a wrestler; he has no style. Finally, show no sympathy toward Hogan, who is the worst friend a man could have. Sure, Beefcake was the one friend Hogan didn't stab in the back, but that doesn't make the "Hulkster" a good man. He befriends people just to keep them from asking for title shots. I can't stand Hogan and I'm glad he lost a friend. I don't like Beefcake and I'm glad the fans hate him. This is all turning out just fine.

***

NEWS ITEM: 911 is mad at Paul E. Dangerously. The young wrestler claims Dangerously keeps getting Sabu shots at Shane Douglas' ECW title and is ignoring him.

GUT REACTION: Who cares about 911? I'll take Sabu.

INFORMED REACTION: A manager has the responsibility to do what's best for all of his wrestlers, not just the most talented ones, but Dangerously is doing the right thing by hoarding the title shots for Sabu. The fact of the matter is that Sabu is one of the most talented young wrestlers in the world and he deserves special attention. It's only a matter of time before Sabu parlays an ECW title reign into a contract with the WWF or WCW, if he wants it. But he'd have a hard time conforming to the way things are done in the big federations.

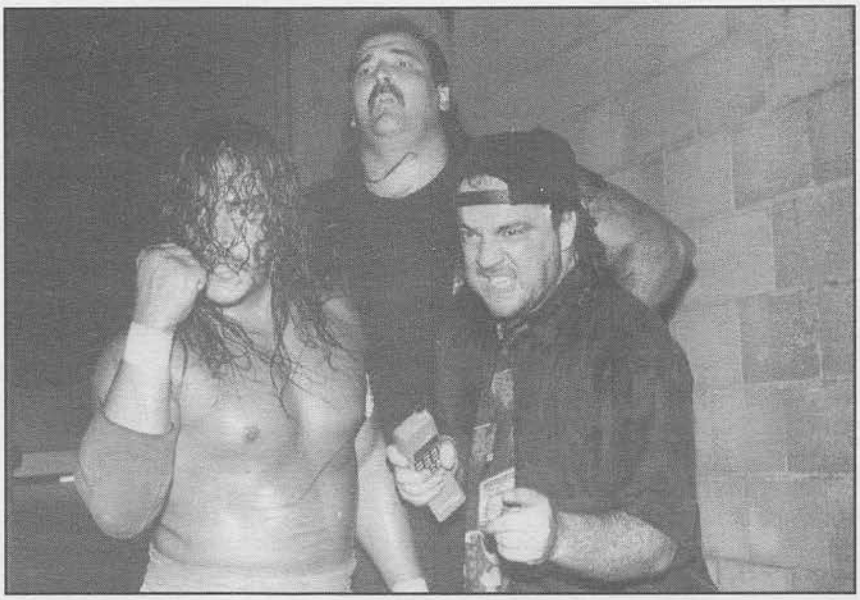
By the way, I do care about 911 because he has some talent. But I'll take Sabu and I'm sure the fans will, too. Sabu vs. Douglas is what they want. Somebody has to pay those cellular phone bills for Dangerously.

***

NEWS ITEM: Matt Brock's niece comes to work as an associate editor at THE WRESTLER and its sister publications. She'll be editing Matt's copy. Matt is angry ... at me for not letting him know.

GUT REACTION: Sorry, Matt. I thought her name was Randi, not Brandi.

INFORMED REACTION: Her name is Brandi and this just might be the thing that forces Matt into retirement. Matt, Florida has some great places to settle down and call it a life. There's a retirement home called Living Legends. □

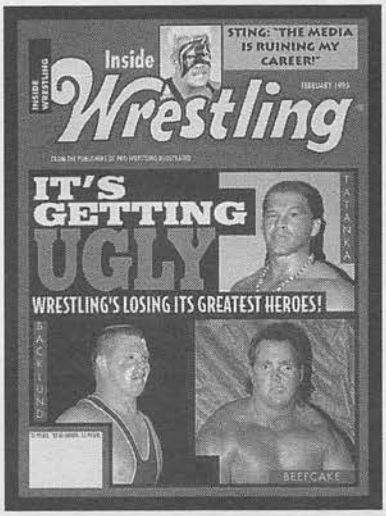


911 is upset that Paul E. Dangerously is getting Sabu title shots in ECW and ignoring him. The manager may deserve some criticism for devoting so much time to Sabu, but then again, Sabu he is on the verge of superstardom.

this month in...

Inside Wrestling

First **BOB BACKLUND** turned his back on the fans, then **TATANKA** did the same. You won't believe who's next—and we'll tell you! ... WWF head **VINCE McMAHON** shocked fans last year when he attacked **JERRY LAWLER** in Memphis. They're constantly battling on WWF airwaves, but are they about to take their war into the ring? This could be the perfect time to sign a match ... **STING** is jealous of **HULK HOGAN**. Sting isn't focused on winning another WCW World title. These are just two rumors that have made this superstar angry. He tells everyone—in his own words—how the media is *ruining* him!

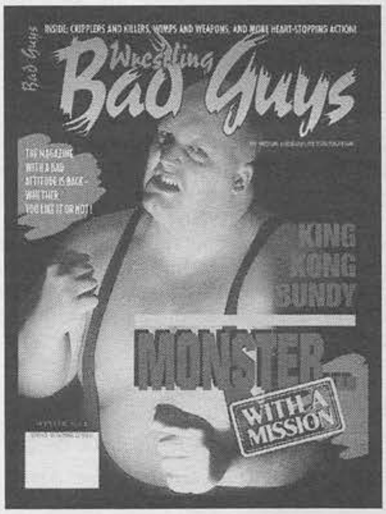


All this—and much more!—in the February 1995 issue of ***Inside Wrestling***

NOW ON SALE!

Wrestling Bad Guys

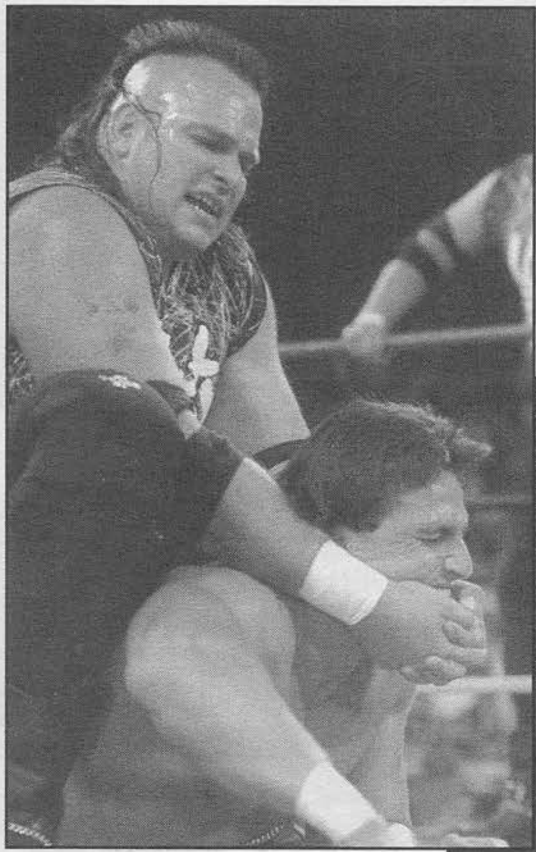
It's *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*'s evil twin publication! ... **KING KONG BUNDY** is back in the WWF, and this time he won't rest until he wins the World title that eluded him in the '80s. He is truly a "monster with a mission" ... **BRET HART** is a gentleman. He's a great WWF champion. He loves his family, and he would do anything to patch up his differences with his brother **OWEN**. If you believe these things, wait until you read what the editors of *Bad Guys* have found out about "The Hitman's" past! It will shock you! ... Think **BIG VAN VADER** is sadistic? You might not know just how mean this behemoth can be! He explains—in his own words!—exactly what his "night of perfect of sadism" would be like!



All this—and much more!—in the Winter 1994 issue of ***Wrestling Bad Guys***

NOW ON SALE!

(Continued from page 7)



Paul Roma is still the co-holder of the WCW World tag team title, but not for long if The Nasty Boys get their way. The Nastys have beaten Roma and Paul Orndorff several times at non-title matches and now want shots at the belts on anyone who doubts what he says.

The Nasty Boys.

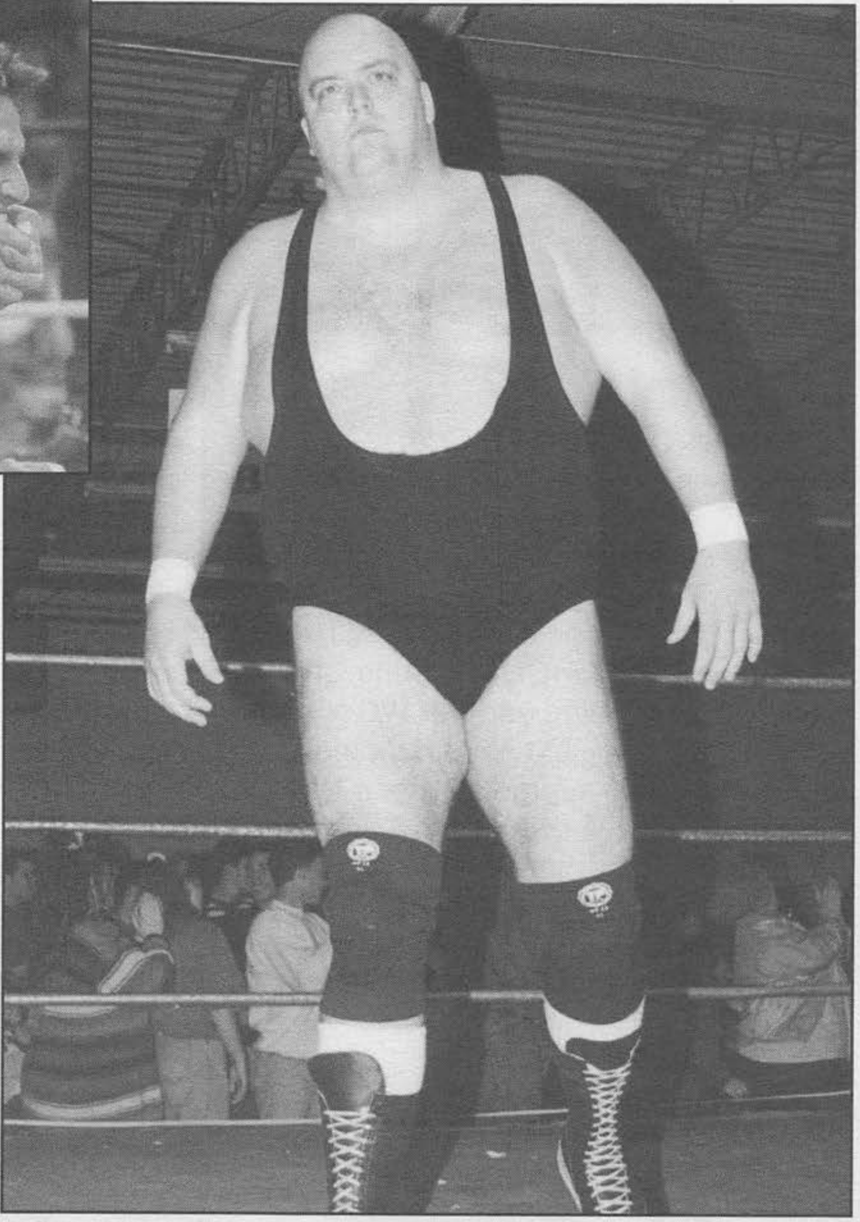
Incidentally, there is talk of dissension in the Bagwell-Patriot camp. I hope they can work out whatever differences they have.

The tag team scene in the WWF is equally chaotic. **Diesel** and **Shawn Michaels** are still the champs, even though, as of this writing, they had gone about three weeks without defending the belts. Michaels broke his hand in October and has been out of action since. Diesel, sources tell me, has offered to defend the title in handicap matches, but the WWF hasn't let him do it.

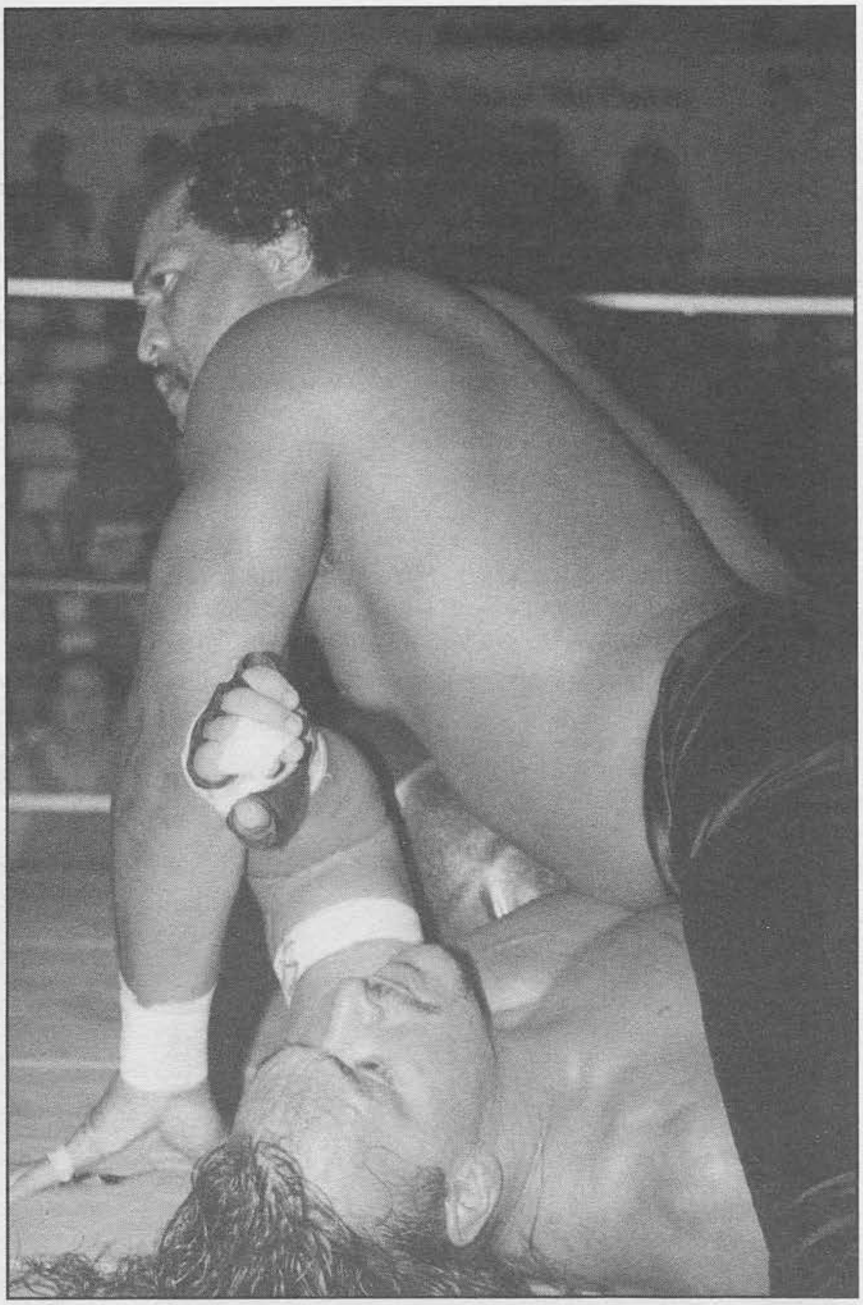
The top contenders continue to be **The Headshrinkers**, but not **Fatu** and **Samu**. **Headshrinker Sionne** (formerly **The Barbarian**) has replaced Sam at least temporarily. **Capt. Lou Albano** tells me he has a new plan to get his men back to the top. He says he will make Fatu and Sionne "more civilized."

It looks like **Jim Neidhart** missed out on his chance to become the next WWF World champion. He got many shots at brother-in-law **Bret Hart** all over North America, but came out on the losing end every time. "The Hitman" also forced him to submit to a "sharpshooter" in a tag team match on *Raw*.

King Kong Bundy, who insists



King Kong Bundy has been as mean and menacing as ever since returning to the WWF. His goal is to win the WWF World title, but the other wrestlers in Ted DiBiase's Corporation probably want the same thing.



Ron Simmons gave Sabu some tough matches on ECW cards in Florida. Now he is targeting Shane Douglas and the heavyweight title. Apparently those two superstars didn't get along too well when they were both in WCW.

that referees make a five-count on his pins so that he can embarrass opponents, is making it known that he wants the World title as well. He may have to battle the other members of **Ted DiBiase's** Corporation to get his title shots. **Tatanka** is in the midst of a war with his former friend and tag team partner **Lex Luger**, but will undoubtedly be seeking a title sometime soon. **Bam Bam Bigelow** is feuding with **Adam Bomb**, and **Irwin R. Schyster** is doing his best to start a feud with **The Undertaker**. I'm not sure that's a good idea, since Undertaker has been trouncing **Yokozuna** in casket matches all over the U.S. lately.

Tony Anthony continues to reign atop Smoky Mountain. The SMW heavyweight champ is still feuding with **Bruiser Bedlam**. They are going at in whipping matches, meaning the loser gets lashed with a belt. Though the "Dirty White Boy" is winning most of the matches, he has lost a few by disqualification. Nevertheless, he has taken his beatings, as he says, "like a man."

Tammy Fytch is not a happy woman these days. She is furious that **Cactus Jack** is attempting to "rescue" **Boo Bradley** from her. The feminist manager treats Bradley like a dog and Jack says he'd be better off becoming a fan favorite and teaming up with him. We'll see who wins this power struggle.

Other than Austin coming in, the big ECW news is that **Ron Simmons** is making a run at Douglas' title. Both are WCW alumni, but I guess they never got along. **2 Cold Scorpio**, yet another former ECW wrestler, won the ECW TV title from **Jason** at a card in Hamburg, but lost it later in the evening to **Dean Malenko**, who is managed by Jason. One night later in Philadelphia, **Public Enemy** regained the tag team title from **Cactus Jack** and **Mikey Whipwreck**. Mikey can rest easy now that he is not a champion anymore.

That's what's happening. See you at the matches! □

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2732/08-94

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)

OWEN IS NO BABY!

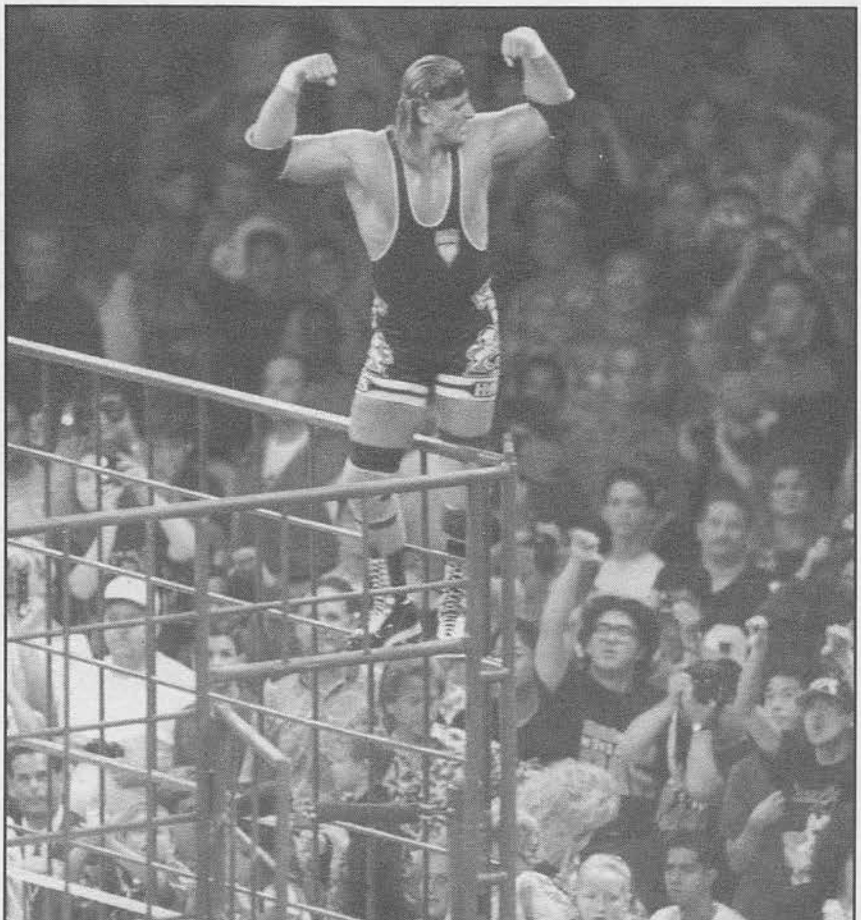
In response to the many letters in your magazine and its sister publications, I have to say that Owen Hart is no baby! This is the man who defeated Bret Hart at WrestleMania X. None of you thought Owen was such a child before Survivor Series 1993, when he turned against Bret.

I'm not saying that Owen is better than Bret, just that he has beaten him clean and fair. If Owen is a baby, that means the WWF World champion has been pinned by a baby. People who say he is would only be degrading their own hero, Bret. Come on, Owen is just Bret's less-experienced younger brother who has a bright future ahead of him. He is the 1994 King of the Ring, "King Of Harts," and anything else he wants to be. Owen is a first-class wrestler.

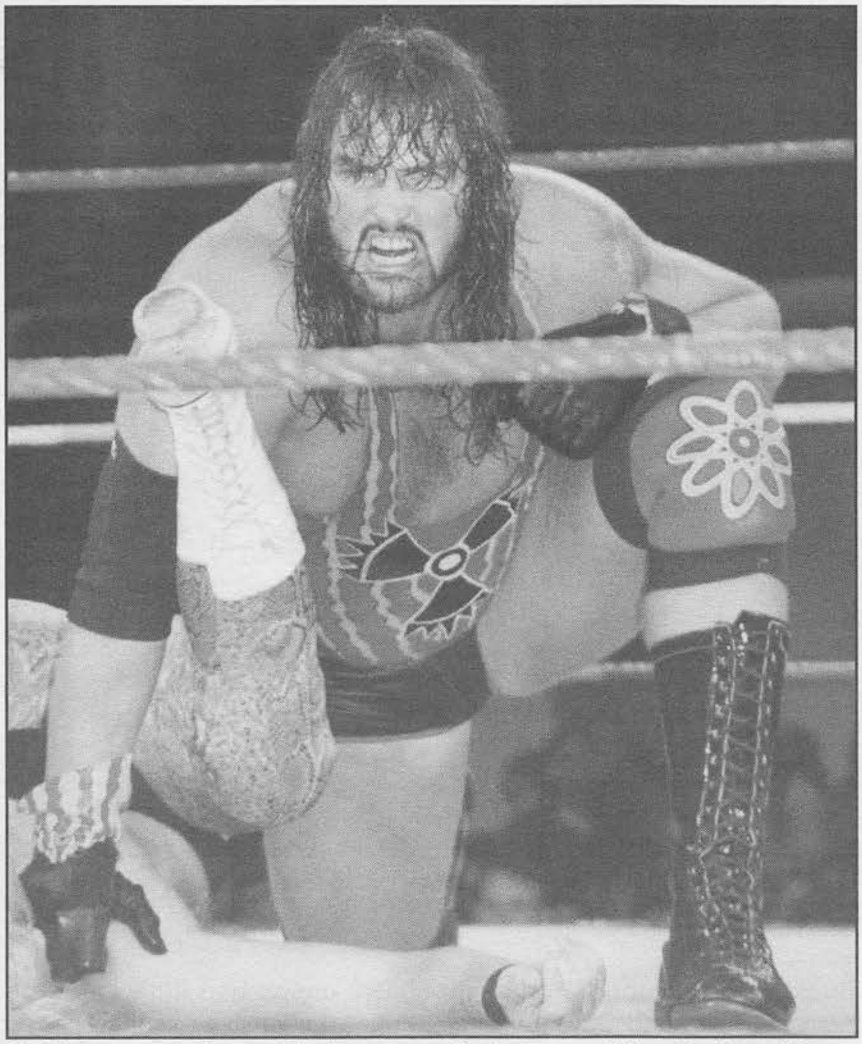
KATHY WILSON
County Down, Northern Ireland

MEANINGLESS TRAVESTY

A travesty has occurred in the WWF, and the federation is ignoring it. Bob Backlund was the man who paved the way for wrestlers



Owen Hart is not a crybaby, according to reader Kathy Wilson. She says "The Rocket" has come a long way and will only get better in the years to come.



Ditching manager Harvey Wippleman was the best move Adam Bomb could have made, says reader Harry Simon. He predicts that 1995 will be the year Bomb shows everyone how great he can be.

like Bret Hart and Shawn Michaels to be champions. Backlund wasn't a muscular brawler. Rather, he was a quick, scientific wrestler, like many of the champions of today. Rather than revere Backlund for this, the WWF has taunted him, given him poor competition, and allowed his frustrations to grow. The WWF should bring back the man that Backlund lost the WWF World title to, The Iron Sheik, so he could avenge his most painful loss. Instead of doing this, they, in effect, turned Backlund into a rulebreaker. While a Bret Hart-Bob Backlund feud sounds exciting, this isn't the way Backlund should be wrestling.

J.J. LAIR
Pleasantville, NJ

GROUND ZERO HERO

Dumping Harvey Wippleman was the best move Adam Bomb could have made ("10...9...8...7... Adam Bomb's Exploding With His New Attitude", December 1994) I liked Bomb from almost the first time I saw him. What a name! With the WWF talent base thinning out, it's only a matter of time before "The Creation Of Devastation's" talent nets him a championship. Bomb has all the tools: power, agility, determination, and now the motivation of having something to prove.

I predict: 1995 will be the year Adam Bomb contaminates and energizes the WWF! 3...2...1...

HARRY SIMON
Las Vegas, NV ☐

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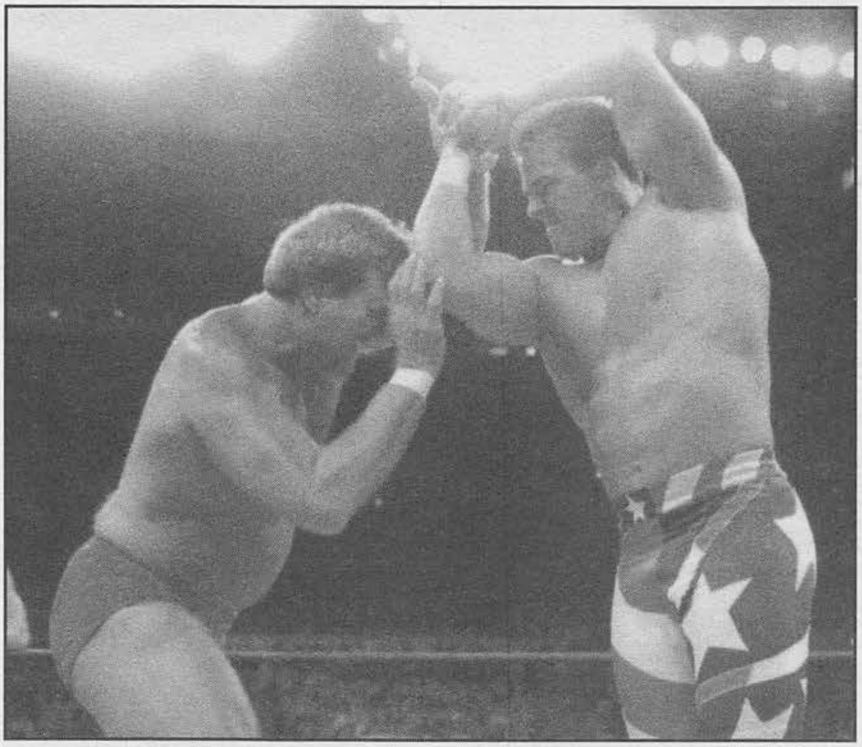
CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

Jack on a table and came crashing down on him with a moonsault. Somehow, Cactus got up and dropped an elbow on Sabu, who still lying on the table.

Sabu found yet another use for a chair when he dropkicked one into Jack's face. He finished Jack off by ramming his face into the mat and pinning him.

In other bouts: Osamu Nishimura beat Kodiak ... Rick Keller pinned Brian Rollins ... Max Anthony & Mickey Doyle beat Steve Nixon & Otis Apollo ... Ray Roberts beat Rick Matrix ... Al Snow and Judge Dread wrestled to a no-contest.



Marcus Bagwell outfoxed Paul Orndorff in a recent tag team match pitting Bagwell and The Patriot against Orndorff and Paul Roma. Bagwell rolled his partner on top of Roma to get his team a victory.

Oakland, CA *(Correspondent—Marc Ferguson):* Paul Orndorff and Paul Roma consider themselves the sneakiest tag team in WCW, but there are a few other duos that know how to bend an occasional rule to pull out a victory.

One of those teams is Marcus Bagwell and The Patriot. At the time of this match, they were the WCW World tag team champions. Orndorff and Roma were determined to do something about that.

They concentrated their attack on Bagwell for almost the entire match, wearing down both his arms and his legs. Finally, he was able to tag Patriot and Patriot got the best of both opponents.

After about 20 minutes of action, Patriot cradled Roma, but with the referee distracted, Orndorff rolled Roma on top. As the referee chased Orndorff into his corner, Bagwell rolled his partner on top for the three-count.

In other bouts: WCW TV champion Johnny B. Badd beat Jean Paul LeVeque ... Honky Tonk Man pinned Brian Pillman ... Sting defeated Lord Steven Regal ... Dustin Rhodes & The Nasty Boys beat Arn Anderson, Bunkhouse Buck, & Col. Robert Parker ... Kevin Sullivan and Dave Sullivan wrestled to a double-countout ... U.S. champion Hacksaw Duggan beat Steve Austin by disqualification ... WCW World champion Hulk Hogan pinned Ric Flair.

Hershey, PA *(Correspondent—Tony Alexander):* One of the hottest feuds going in the WWF today has former friends Lex Luger and Tatanka battling each other all over the country. Luger is still upset that Tatanka turned his back on him to join Ted DiBiase's Corporation, while Tatanka thinks Lex is the stupid one for remaining loyal to the fans.

The hostility between them was evident in this match.

Tatanka screamed obscenities at Luger before it started and had the nerve to spit on him. They traded blows throughout the match, though Tatanka's tomahawk chops had little effect on Luger. Luger used clotheslines to knock Tatanka down a few times.

Eventually, both men rolled out of the ring, where they continued to exchange punches. The bout ended in a double-countout, but Luger wasn't satisfied. He took the house microphone and demanded that Tatanka return so the fans could see the match come to a decisive conclusion. Tatanka complied and Luger put him in a "torture rack," but the bout was never officially restarted.

In other bouts: The Bushwhackers beat Well Dunn ... Bob "Spark Plugg" Holly pinned Kwang the Ninja ... Jeff Jarrett pinned The Kid ... Diesel pinned Headshrinker Sionne ... WWF World Women's champion Alundra Blayze beat Bull Nakano ... WWF World champ Bret Hart beat Jim Neidhart ... The Undertaker beat Yokozuna in a casket match. □

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 16)

it happened. Now everybody is out to get me again. Life isn't fair, but I have no choice. I have to keep wrestling or Cactus will come after me."

***

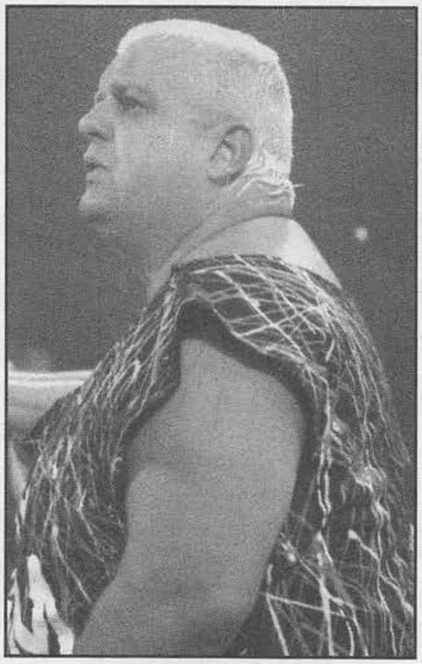
Q: "I have a question for Ric Flair: Now that you are retired, can you finally tell us if it was you who got Brutus Beefcake and those other people under the masks to attack Hulk Hogan?"—Philip Wendt, Brimley, MI

A: **"Show me some evidence," Flair replied. "Did anyone ever pull a mask off one of those masked men and find my face under it? I don't think so. No one ever had any proof that I had anything to do with any of those attacks on Hogan. But Hogan said it had to be me behind it, and everyone just assumed he was right. You want to know what I think? I think Hogan is paranoid. He still worries about me. I think The Butcher finally came to his senses when he attacked Hogan. Whoever was behind that whole scheme is a genius, but it wasn't me. I'm too nice a guy to do something like that."**

***

Q: "This question is for Ole Anderson: Is your son Bryant really as good as you say he is?"—Jack Feldman, Terre Haute, IN

A: **"He's my son," said Ole. "That's about all you need to know. There's no other family with a greater tradition than the Andersons. Gene, Lars, myself, Arn, now Bryant. Let me tell you this: Bryant could be the greatest of them all. I've been training him for years and you see how he's kicking Tracey Smothers' sorry butt all over Smoky Mountain. There's no stopping him, as far as I can see. After he's done with Smothers, he'll move on to the 'Dirty White Boy.' Tony Anthony won't stand a chance of holding on to that heavyweight title of his once Bryant sets his sights on him. The thing that most impresses me about my son is that he is already one of the greatest scientific wrestlers around. When he really learns to brawl like all us great Andersons, no one will be able to stop him."**



Don't expect Dusty Rhodes' recent return to wrestling to become a full-time comeback. "The American Dream" says he is always willing to help his son Dustin pummel Col. Rob Parker's Stud Stable, however.

***

Q: "I have a question for Jerry Lawler: You made fun of Doink and Dink for months. I thought the jokes you made about Dink were especially tasteless, but now you have three midgets on your side. Why?"—Rich Roane, Hartford, CT

A: **"I'll tell you something, Rich, if that's your real name," answered Lawler. "I have nothing against midgets, if that's what you're trying to imply. I have something against clowns. If Dink and Wink and Pink and Stink and whatever other little idiots Doink finds hiding under rocks somewhere weren't just a bunch of buffoons, then I wouldn't have a problem with them. I hate clowns. All they want to do is play tricks. They think they're real funny when they play their little pranks on people, but when Queasy, Sleazy, Cheezy, and I get them in the ring, we shut 'em up real fast. That's because my men are like me; they're kings. They know how to wrestle and they're helping me get rid of these clowns. They're my kind of guys."**

***

Q: "I have a question for Dusty Rhodes: You said you weren't coming back for good when you teamed with Dustin a few times, but I see you're still wrestling some tag team matches. What's going on?"—Rhonda Leers, San Jose, CA

A: **"That's a very good question, Rhonda," Dusty said. "I'm sticking to my original plan. I do not plan to come back for good. Those ol' competitive juices do start flowing every time I step into the ring, though. When I think about all those terrible things Col. Parker and his men did to my boy, I keep gettin' madder and madder. It feels so good when I plant one of my bionic elbows upside the head of Arn Anderson or Bunkhouse Buck or Terry Funk. They won't tell you, but they know 'The American Dream' still has what it takes to hurt them. Anytime Dustin needs me, I'll be there for him."** □

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March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.
May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.
June 1988/Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.
July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich.
October 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Fantastics, Hennig, Roberts-Rude.
November 1988/Stories include: Midnight Ex., DiBiase, Bossman, Brody.
January 1989/Stories include: Kevin Von, Rougeaus, Horsemen, Hogan.
February 1989/Stories include: Warriors, Ultimate-Hogan, Bigelow-Gordy.
May 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Savage-Hogan, Dusty, Valentine.
June 1989/Stories include: Steamboat, Martel, Ultimate-Savage, Luger, Flair.
July 1989/Stories include: Warrior, Hogan-Bravo, Flair-Steamboat, Rhodes.
September 1989/Stories include: Flair-Funk, Piper, Demolition, Zeus.
October 1989/Stories include: Hogan & Beefcake vs. Zeus & Savage, Hyatt, Hayes.
November 1989/Stories include: Piper-Savage-Hogan, Dusty, Flair-Funk.
December 1989/Stories include: Muta-Sting, Andre-Ultimate, Windham.
January 1990/Stories include: Pillman, Hogan, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn.
February 1990/Stories include: Sting-Luger, Gordy, Martel, Hogan-Brown.
March 1990/Stories include: Steiners, Flair-Funk, Hogan-Zeus, Survivors.
April 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Woman, Piper-Heenan, Travis.
June 1990/Stories include: Hogan, Rockers, Koloffs, Horsemen, Flair-Luger.
July 1990/Stories include: Poffo, Dusty-Savage, Luger-Flair, Doom, Blanchard.
August 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Warrior, Embry, Demolition, Doom.
September 1990/Stories include: Ultimate, Haynes, Luger, Doom, Tugboat.
October 1990/Stories include: Hogan-Earthquake, Ultimate, Flair, Rich.
November 1990/Stories include: Luger & Sting, Beefcake, Race, Steiners.
February 1991/Stories include: Sting-Vicious, Muta-Steamboat, Warrior, Hogan.
March 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Warrior, Piper, Cornette, Steiners.
April 1991/Stories include: Hogan, DiBiase, Skyscrapers, Luger, Zenk.
May 1991/Stories include: Hogan-Slaughter, Flair, Eaton, Sheik-Bobo.
June 1991/Stories include: Hogan, Nastys, Sting, Flair, Cactus Jack.
July 1991/Stories include: Flair-Fujinami, Nastys, Steiners, Savage.
August 1991/Stories include: Slaughter, Luger-Nikita, Hennig, Poffo.
September 1991/Stories include: Steiners vs. Sting & Luger, LOD, Cactus.
November 1991/Stories include: Luger, Steamboat, Piper, Global.
December 1991/Stories include: Flair-Hogan, Beverlys, Sting-Luger.
January 1992/Stories include: LOD, Badd, Hughes, Roberts, Gossett.
February 1992/Stories include: Flair, Simmons, Santana, Backlund.
March 1992/Stories include: Pillman, WWF title, Rude, Mountie-Hart.
April 1992/Stories include: Bearer, WCW magic, Hennig & Flair, LPWA.
May 1992/Stories include: Flair, Anderson & Eaton, Piper, Rhodes, USWA.
June 1992/Stories include: Flair-Hogan-Justice, Gilbert, Warrior, Vegas.
July 1992/Stories include: Rude, LOD, Madusa, Monsoon, Nurse Vanessa.
August 1992/Stories include: Warrior, Bunkhouse, Undertaker-Roberts, Sting.
September 1992/Stories include: LOD, Repo vs. Crush, Kleen, Freebirds.
October 1992/Stories include: Bulldog & Warrior, Lee, Martel-Tatanka, Austin.
November 1992/Stories include: Crush, Reed, Hennig, Sting, Rogers.
December 1992/Stories include: Hogan, Roberts, Simmons, Rock 'n' Rolls.
January 1993/Stories include: Ramon-Savage, Sting-Roberts, Disasters.
February 1993/Stories include: Hart, Rick Steiner, Backlund, Austin.
April 1993/Stories include: What's in/out, Ramon, Steamboat, Patriot, Tatanka.
June 1993/Stories include: Sting-Vader, Doink & Christopher, Steiners, Lawler.
July 1993/Stories include: Smith-Vader, Ramon, Rhodes, Tatanka, Bravo murder.
August 1993/Stories include: Hogan-Yokozuna, Jarrett, Vicious, Hart, Payne.
October 1993/Stories include: Vader & Vicious, SummerSlam lists, sHart-Lawler.
November 1993/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Hogan, Luger, Jannetty, Bodies, Power Bombs.
December 1993/Stories include: Luger, Sting & Flair, Fytch, Luna, Austin.
January 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Rude-Flair, Bagwell & Scorpio, Cornette.
February 1994/Stories include: Vicious & Arn, Yokozuna, Vader-Cactus, steroids.
April 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Savage-Crush, Flair, Blayze, Adams, Boss.
May 1994/Stories include: Royal Rumble, Hulk minus bulk, Boss, Douglas-Sherri.
July 1994/Stories incllude: Flair vs. Hogan, DiBiase, Crockett, Douglas, WWF.
August 1994/Stories include: Cactus-Vader, M.O.M., Hart & Yokozuna, Badd.
October 1994/Stories include: Undertaker, Cactus, Scorpio-Sabu, Funk, Sheik.
November 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Owen, Bret, Badd, Lawler.
December 1994/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Vicious, Austin, Bomb.
January 1995/Stories include: Holiday gifts, DiBiase, Badd, Backlund, PG-13.
February 1995/Stories include: Hogan, Steiners, Undertaker, Sabu, Honky Tonk.

THE WRESTLER

☐ NOV 76	☐ JUNE 85	☐ OCT 88	☐ FEB 91	☐ DEC 92
☐ FEB 79	☐ JULY 85	☐ NOV 88	☐ MAR 91	☐ JAN 93
☐ AUG 79	☐ DEC 85	☐ JAN 89	☐ APR 91	☐ FEB 93
☐ FEB 80	☐ FEB 86	☐ FEB 89	☐ MAY 91	☐ APR 93
☐ MAR 80	☐ MAR 86	☐ MAY 89	☐ JUNE 91	☐ JUNE 93
☐ AUG 80	☐ JULY 86	☐ JUNE 89	☐ JULY 91	☐ JULY 93
☐ OCT 80	☐ DEC 86	☐ JULY 89	☐ AUG 91	☐ AUG 93
☐ JUNE 81	☐ JAN 87	☐ SEPT 89	☐ SEPT 91	☐ OCT 93
☐ APR 82	☐ FEB 87	☐ OCT 89	☐ NOV 91	☐ NOV 93
☐ FEB 83	☐ MAR 87	☐ NOV 89	☐ DEC 91	☐ DEC 93
☐ APR 83	☐ APR 87	☐ DEC 89	☐ JAN 92	☐ JAN 94
☐ JUNE 83	☐ JUNE 87	☐ JAN 90	☐ FEB 92	☐ FEB 94
☐ JULY 83	☐ JULY 87	☐ FEB 90	☐ MAR 92	☐ APR 94
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☐ JULY 84	☐ NOV 87	☐ APR 90	☐ MAY 92	☐ JULY 94
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☐ OCT 84	☐ JAN 88	☐ JULY 90	☐ JULY 92	☐ OCT 94
☐ DEC 84	☐ MAR 88	☐ AUG 90	☐ AUG 92	☐ NOV 94
☐ JAN 85	☐ MAY 88	☐ SEPT 90	☐ SEPT 92	☐ DEC 94
☐ FEB 85	☐ JUNE 88	☐ OCT 90	☐ OCT 92	☐ JAN 95
☐ MAR 85	☐ JULY 88	☐ NOV 90	☐ NOV 92	☐ FEB 95

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The Wrestler SPOTLIGHTS...

Every month, *The Wrestler* will comb through its extensive photo files and shine its spotlight on an outstanding wrestler, manager, or tag team. We'll present unforgettable highlights in the action-packed careers of the sport's greatest stars, culled from the most extensive photographic archives anywhere in the wrestling world!

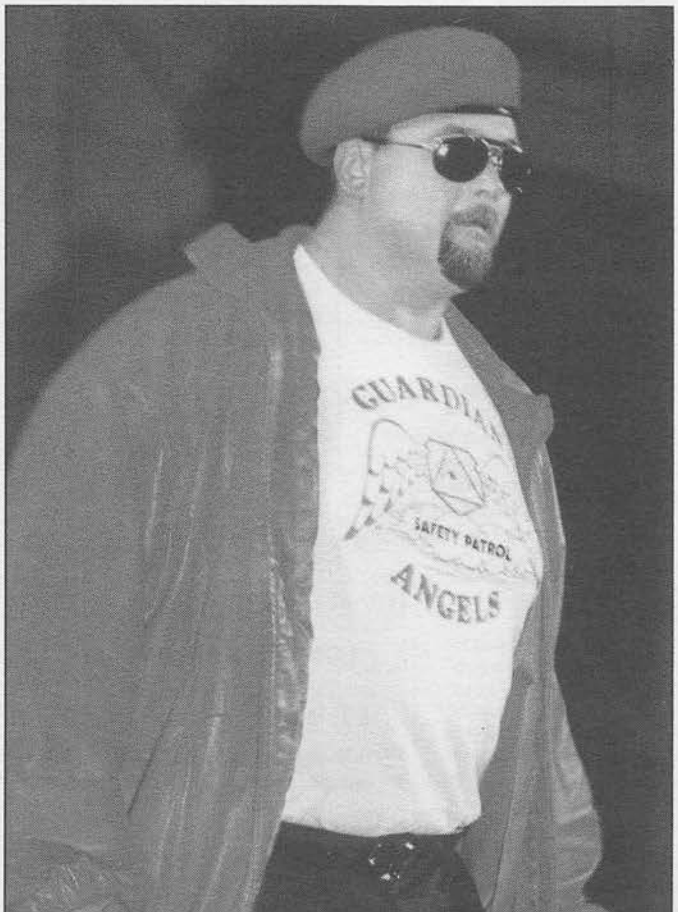
THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL, The Boss, Big Bossman, Big Bubba Rogers ... whatever name he uses, this 6'6", 310-pound former corrections officer is extremely tough. He most recently proved that in a grueling series of matches against Big Van Vader, WCW's top superheavyweight.

Angel started out in the sport in 1986 as Big Bubba Rogers, Jim Cornette's personal bodyguard. He scored the biggest victory of his young career when he beat Ronnie Garvin in a Louisville street fight at Starrcade '86.

In 1987, he signed with Gen. Skandor Akbar in the UWF, where he won his first major title by defeating One Man Gang for the heavyweight belt in April of that year. He lost the title to Steve Williams four months later.

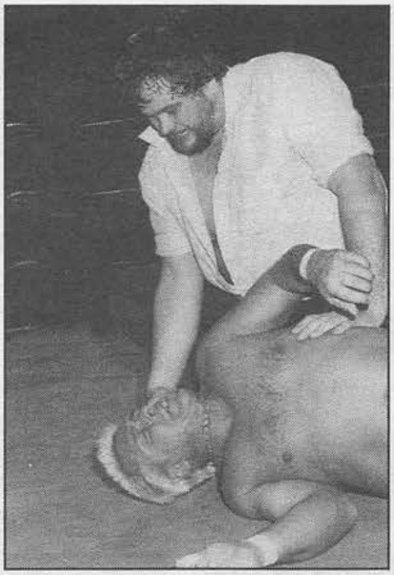
Though he returned to Cornette's camp in the NWA shortly thereafter, he found that he wasn't satisfied just being a bodyguard. It was off to the WWF for Rogers, where he donned a prison guard's uniform, became Big Bossman, and signed Slick as his manager. Anyone who dared to wrestle him took a big risk, as he frequently beat his opponents with a nightstick after pinning them.



He soon targeted World champ Hulk Hogan, and the two had some very brutal matches. Bossman also became a force in tag teams when Slick paired him with Akeem and called them The Twin Towers. Bossman and Akeem came close to winning the World tag title from Demolition, but eventually split up.

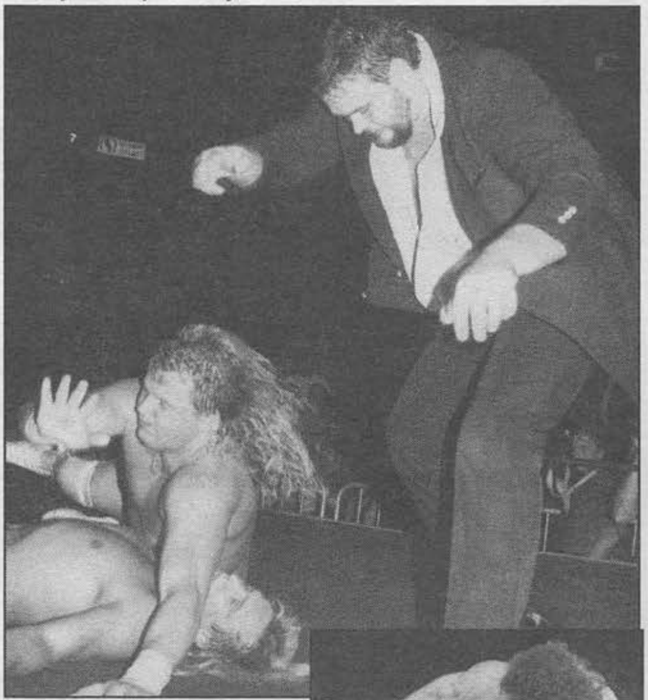
Then came the turning point in Bossman's career. In January 1990, he got into an argument with Slick when he felt he was owed money for helping Ted DiBiase. After turning against Slick, Bossman became one of the most popular men in the federation. He even befriended Hogan, and was in his corner at SummerSlam' 90 when the "Hulkster" defeated Earthquake. Later, Bossman targeted Rick Rude after Rude and Bobby Heenan insulted his mother.

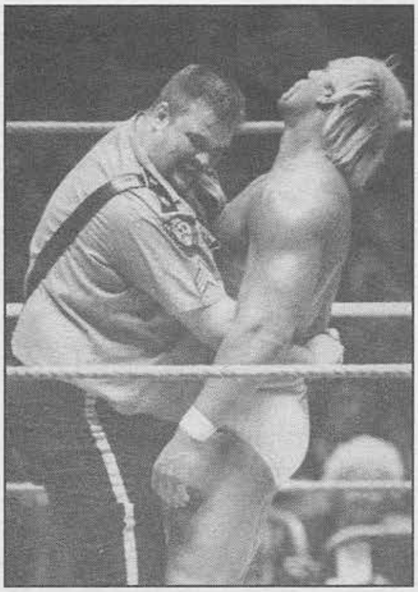
After leaving the WWF, Bossman spent several years on the independent circuit before showing up in WCW in December 1993. He briefly revived his feud with Rude there before turning his attention to Vader. He changed his name to The Guardian Angel after training with members of that group for several weeks. But no matter what his name is, this athlete deserves his time in our "Spotlight."



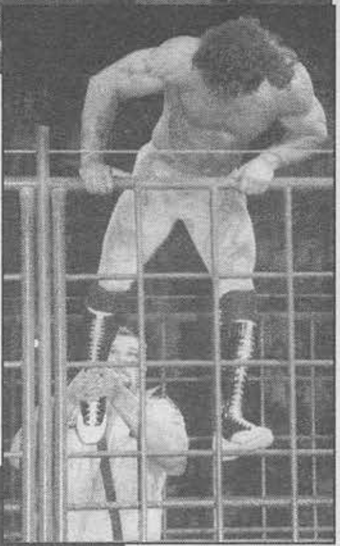
▶February 1987: Ronnie Garvin was one of the first wrestlers to feel the wrath of Big Bubba Rogers the wrestler. Rogers beat Garvin in a Louisville street fight at Starrcade '86, and used a chain to kayo him in this bout.

▼July 1987: When he wasn't wrestling, Rogers the bodyguard was always there to lend a hand to Jim Cornette and company. In this match, his interference helped The Midnight Express' Bobby Eaton pin Ricky Morton.

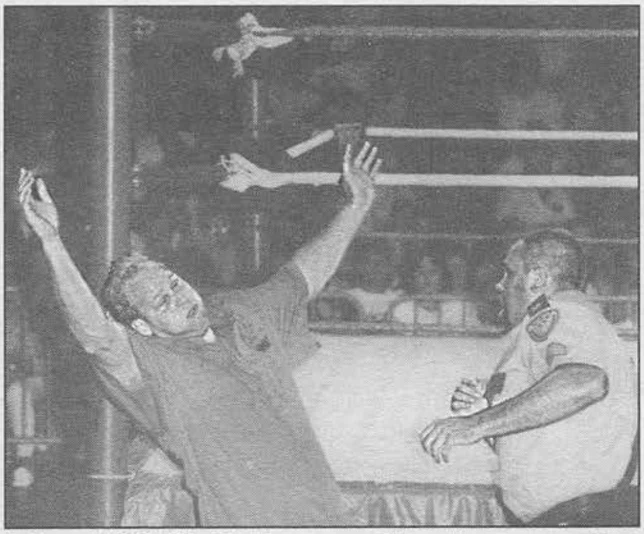




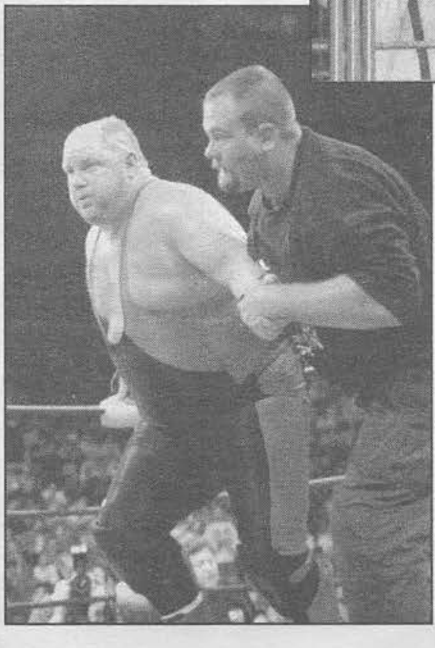
◀November 1988: When Big Bossman first arrived in the WWF, he was a no-nonsense rulebreaker. It didn't take him long to target Hulk Hogan; the "Hulkster" had trouble handling the power of the former corrections officer.



▶ December 1990: No one insults Bossman's mother and gets away with it! By this time, he was a fan favorite and was not amused when Rick Rude made some nasty comments about his mother. They clashed in several steel cage matches.



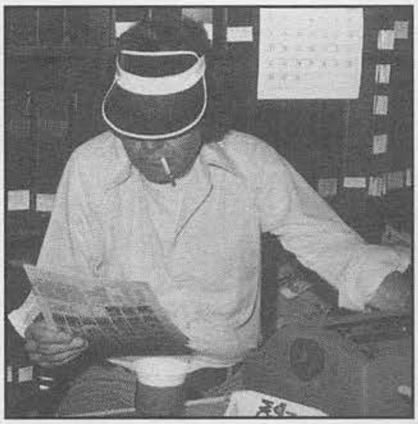
▲August 1992: What better opponent for a former corrections officer than Nailz the Convict? The two brawlers briefly feuded, and their battles often went outside the ring, where Bossman rocked his foe with powerful right hands.



◀October 1994: In WCW, Bossman changed his name to The Guardian Angel and feuded with the baddest of the bad in that federation, Big Van Vader. Angel gave Vader tougher battles than most people expected.

MATT BROCK'S LOOKING BACK

March 1962
JIM DALTON vs. BULL CURRY



CALL ME CYNICAL, but some of the matches today are getting boring. During the pre-rock 'n' wrestling glamour days, there were some memorable matches, too. Back then, looks didn't matter as much as your reputation in the ring.

Back in during the 1950s and 1960s, the matches were different. There were no merchandising catalogs to leaf through or any ice cream pops in the shape of your favorite wrestler to eat. The matches were no-holds-barred, no-glitter wars.

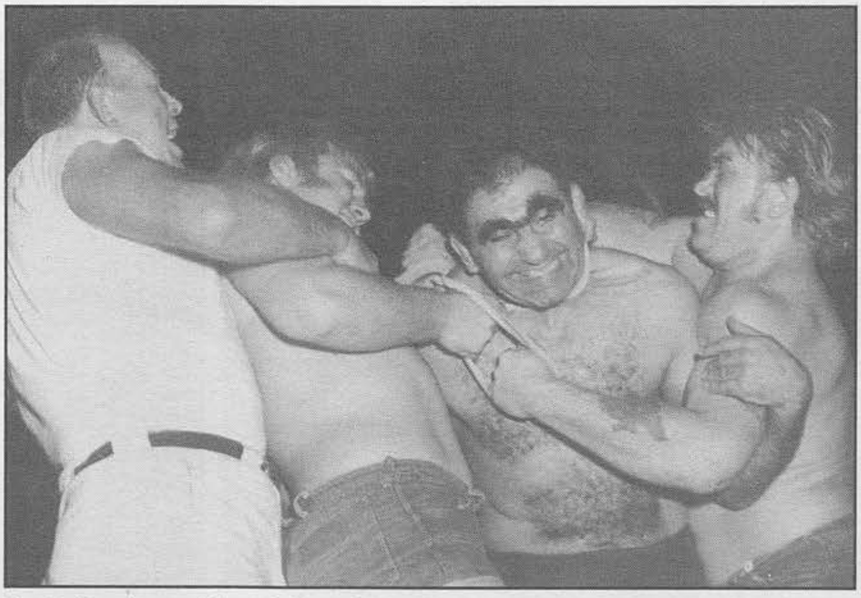
Sometimes they would have special stipulations, such as when Jack Dalton battled Bull Curry in Houston, some 23 years ago. This was no ordinary grudge match. This was a paint match. That's right, the winner got to paint the loser with a gallon of bright green house paint.

You know, back then the paint had lead in it, too. Doctors today say paint with lead in it can do a lot of damage, but they say everything is deadly.

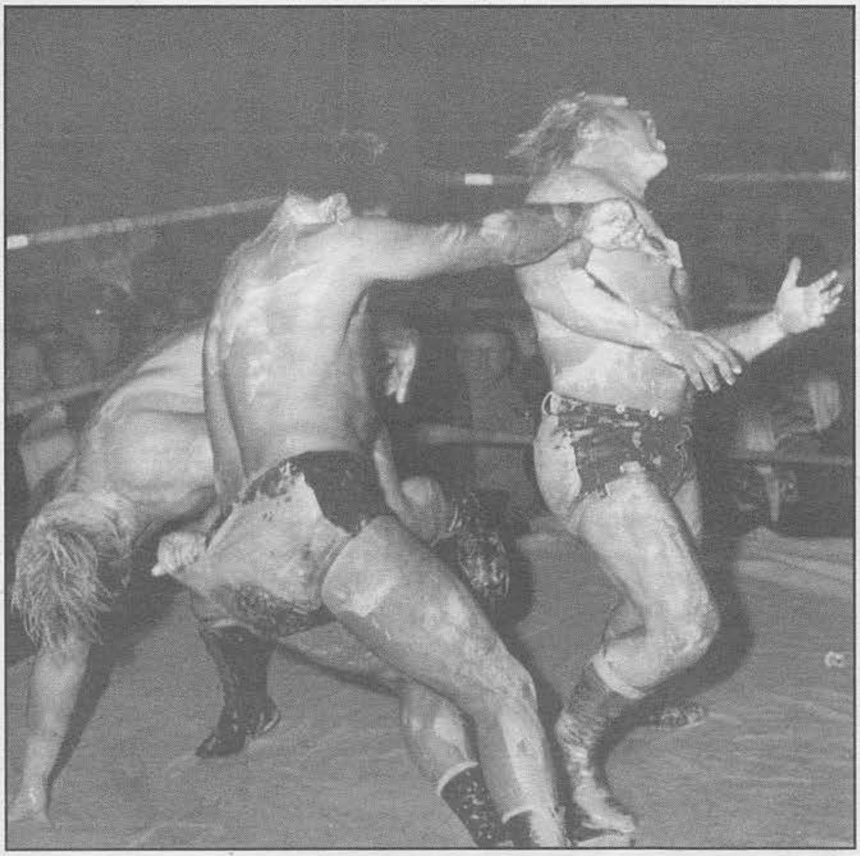
Back then, no one backed down from any stipulation match. Not if he wanted to walk into the locker room without being laughed at it, he didn't.

Dalton, one of the most hated men in Texas, stepped into the ring to a chorus of boos that was salted with a dash of applause. Dalton wasn't a favorite with the fans, but the man he was facing was no choir boy either.

Bull Curry snarled at the fans the whole time, batting away the



Jim Dalton (second from left) couldn't stand by and watch Bull Curry pummel his brother Jack. Unfortunately, Jim's interference got Jack disqualified and that meant Curry would be allowed to cover Jack with a coat of paint.



It wasn't long before all three combatants were covered in paint. Curry was still trying to use the brush to paint Jack, while Jim grabbed Curry's tights in a desperate attempt to help his brother.

half-filled cups that were thrown at him. Despite what a certain policeman said that night, yours truly has never thrown anything into any wrestling ring anywhere.

Curry just wanted to win and paint Dalton from head to toe.

The two men eyed each other from their respective corners. The fans didn't care who won, they just wanted to see some paint spilled. Curry launched the first attack. He lunged across the ring at Dalton. Dalton fought back, landing several well-placed punches on Curry's torso.

Curry latched onto Dalton's throat with a strangling chokehold. I heard a couple of ladies screaming behind me. This was obviously their first look at Curry, because he hadn't even begun to show his mean side.

He threw Dalton across the ring by his neck. Gasping for air, Dalton went outside the ring to regain his composure. Curry followed him, slamming Dalton's head into the ring apron. Dalton retaliated by doing the same to Curry, then slipped back into the ring.

Curry, slightly dazed, made his way into the ring, where Dalton was waiting for him. Dalton started stomping on Curry's head, much to the delight of the fans. As the cheers grew increasingly louder, though, Curry became more incensed. He took out his rage on Dalton, knocking him down and viciously pummeling him with the fury of a madman. Appropriate, because he was a madman. If you ever tried to interview him after a match, you'd understand.

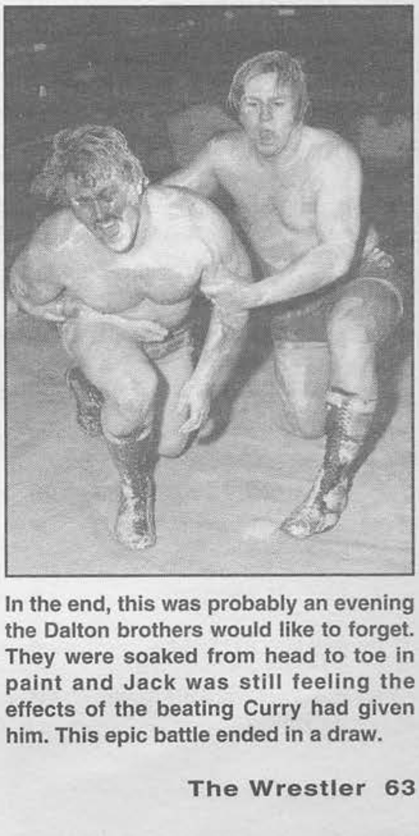
Dalton could not defend against the flurry of punches, clawings, and jabs. He was almost a finished—and painted—man, but help was on the way.

Jack's younger brother Jim stormed to ringside. Just seconds after he got there, the referee momentarily turned his back to the action. Jim reached into the ring and grabbed Curry by his bushy eyebrow, dragging him off his fallen brother. The ref saw it and stopped the match, disqualifying Dalton.

Dalton's painted future was painstakingly delayed while the ring was covered with a protective tarp. The crowd went berserk when a gallon of paint and a brush were presented to Curry. He started with Dalton's face. Jim Dalton could not sit back and watch his brother's ordeal; he entered the ring, blindsiding Curry. All hell broke loose as the Daltons proved why they were notorious throughout Texas. With paint flying, the Daltons pummeled Curry amidst a chorus of cheers from the crowd.

In the end, everyone and everything was covered with a thick coat of green and the fans were once again the real winners. They saw one heck of a match.

I still can't get the paint out of the jacket I wore that night, but that doesn't mean I don't still pull it out of the closet now and then. □



In the end, this was probably an evening the Dalton brothers would like to forget. They were soaked from head to toe in paint and Jack was still feeling the effects of the beating Curry had given him. This epic battle ended in a draw.

THE Wrestler

TOP 10

1 **BRET HART**
234, Calgary, Alberta
(2) WWF World champion

2 **HULK HOGAN**
275, Venice Beach, CA
(1) WCW World champion

3 **HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
(8) U.S. heavyweight champion

4 **RAZOR RAMON**
287, Miami, FL
(3) WWF Intercontinental champion

5 **THE UNDERTAKER**
328, parts unknown
(4) No. 2 contender: WWF World title

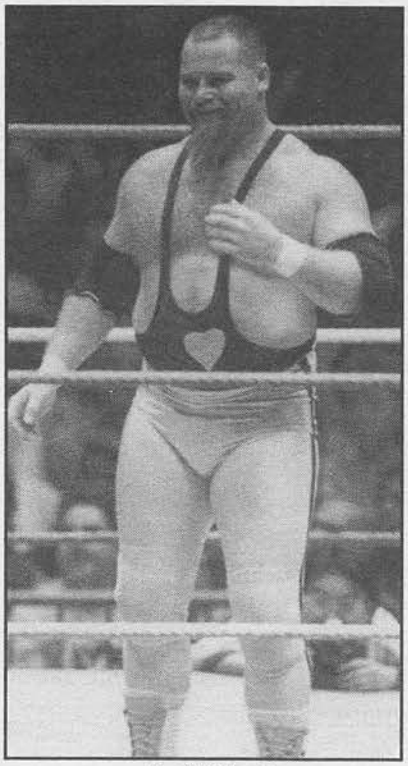
6 **JIM NEIDHART**
275, Tampa, FL
(-) No. 3 contender: WWF World title

7 **BIG VAN VADER**
450, Denver, CO
(7) No. 3 contender: WCW World title

8 **JOHNNY B. BADD**
235, Macon, GA
(-) WCW TV champion

9 **SID VICIOUS**
318, West Memphis, AR
(-) USWA heavyweight champion

10 **TONY ANTHONY**
235, Bucksnort, TN
(10) Smoky Mountain champion



Jim Neidhart

TAG TEAMS

1 **PAUL ORNDORFF & PAUL ROMA**
Combined weight: 488 pounds
(3) WCW World tag team champions

2 **THE NASTY BOYS**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
(2) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title

3 **THE GANGSTAS**
Combined weight: 456 pounds
(6) Smoky Mountain tag team champions

4 **MARCUS BAGWELL & THE PATRIOT**
Combined weight: 491 pounds
(1) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title

5 **THE SMOKIN' GUNNS**
Combined weight: 465 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

6 **THE MOONDOGS**
Combined weight: 450 pounds
(-) USWA tag team champions

7 **PUBLIC ENEMY**
Combined weight: 583 pounds
(10) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title

8 **THE BUSHWHACKERS**
Combined weight: 499 pounds
(9) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

9 **THE HEAVENLY BODIES**
Combined weight: 450 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

10 **THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
Combined weight: 453 pounds
(7) No. 2 contenders: Smoky Mountain tag title

WCW

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
(C) 275, Venice Beach, CA

1—**HACKSAW DUGGAN** (1) 280, Glens Falls, NY
2—**JOHNNY B. BADD** (2) 235, Macon, GA
3—**BIG VAN VADER** (3) 450, Denver, CO
4—**STEVE AUSTIN** (7) 241, Dallas, TX
5—**STING** (4) 260, Venice Beach, CA
6—**THE HONKY TONK MAN** (8) 278, Memphis, TN
7—**DAVE SULLIVAN** (-) 283, Boston, MA
8—**DUSTIN RHODES** (9) 254, Austin, TX
9—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE** (-) 273, San Francisco, CA
10—**THE GUARDIAN ANGEL** (6) 310, Cobb County, GA

WWF

World Champion:
BRET HART
(C) 234, Calgary, Alberta

1—**RAZOR RAMON** (1) 287, Miami, FL
2—**THE UNDERTAKER** (4) 328, parts unknown
3—**JIM NEIDHART** (2) 275, Tampa, FL
4—**LEX LUGER** (7) 265, Chicago, IL
5—**TATANKA** (8) 250, Pembroke, NC
6—**BOB BACKLUND** (3) 234, Princeton, MN
7—**JEFF JARRETT** (-) 230, Nashville, TN
8—**KING KONG BUNDY** (-) 446, Atlantic City, NJ
9—**ADAM BOMB** (9) 292, Harrisburg, PA
10—**IRWIN R. SCHYSTER** (10) 248, Syracuse, NY

USWA

USWA Champion:
SID VICIOUS
(C) 318, West Memphis, AR

1—**TOMMY RICH** (1) 248, Hendersonville, TN
2—**JERRY LAWLER** (3) 234, Memphis, TN
3—**MABEL** (-) 503, Harlem, NY
4—**BRIAN CHRISTOPHER** (5) 230, Memphis, TN
5—**DOUG GILBERT** (6) 241, Lexington, TN
6—**BUDDY LANDELL** (4) 236, Los Angeles, CA
7—**SPELLBINDER** (-) 246, parts unknown
8—**JEFF GAYLORD** (8) 280, St. Louis, MO
9—**REGGIE B. FINE** (-) 215, Memphis, TN
10—**TONY WILLIAMS** (-) 235, Memphis, TN

ECW

ECW Champion:
SHANE DOUGLAS
(C) 223, Pittsburgh, PA

1—**RON SIMMONS** (5) 260, Perry, GA
2—**SABU** (1) 220, Bombay
3—**DEAN MALENKO** (8) 216, Tampa, FL
4—**2 COLD SCORPIO** (-) 222, Denver, CO
5—**CACTUS JACK** (-) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
6—**CHRIS BENOIT** (-) 218, Edmonton, Alberta
7—**911** (2) 310, parts unknown
8—**MR. HUGHES** (3) 308, Kansas City, KS
9—**TOMMY DREAMER** (6) 245, Yonkers, NY
10—**TASMANIAC** (7) 221, Tasmania

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

1 **HULK HOGAN**
275, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular

2 **BRET HART**
234, Calgary, Alberta
Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular

3 **STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular

4 **THE UNDERTAKER**
328, parts unknown
Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular

5 **RAZOR RAMON**
287, Miami, FL
Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular

6 **DAVEY BOY SMITH**
245, Leeds, England
Last issue: No. 6 Most Popular

7 **HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular

8 **LEX LUGER**
265, Chicago, IL
Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular

9 **JOHNNY B. BADD**
235, Macon, GA
Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular

10 **DUSTIN RHODES**
254, Austin, TX
Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1 **BOB BACKLUND**
234, Princeton, MN
Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated

2 **BIG VAN VADER**
450, Denver, CO
Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated

3 **TATANKA**
250, Pembroke, NC
Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated

4 **JIM NEIDHART**
275, Tampa, FL
Last issue: No. 4 Most Hated

5 **JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN
Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated

6 **RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated

7 **SHAWN MICHAELS**
234, San Antonio, TX
Last issue: No. 7 Most Hated

8 **OWEN HART**
227, Calgary, Alberta
Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated

9 **DIESEL**
356, Las Vegas, NV
Last issue: No. 9 Most Hated

10 **SHANE DOUGLAS**
223, Pittsburgh, PA
Last issue: No. 10 Most Hated

SMOKY MOUNTAIN

Smoky Mountain Champion:
TONY ANTHONY
(C) 235, Bucksnort, TN

1—BRUISER BEDLAM
(1) 235, Newark, NJ

2—CHRIS CANDIDO
(-) 226, Carteret, NJ

3—TRACEY SMOTHERS
(3) 227, Atlanta, GA

4—BOO BRADLEY
(2) 310, parts unknown

5—BRYANT ANDERSON
(5) 240, Atlanta, GA

6—LANCE STORM
(4) 231, Memphis, TN

7—BRIAN LEE
(-) 251, Los Angeles, CA

8—BOBBY BLAZE
(-) 222, Charlotte, NC

9—CACTUS JACK
(10) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM

10—STEVE SKYFIRE
(8) 229, Knoxville, TN

INTERNATIONAL

Triple Crown Champion:
TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(-) 245, Tizhigi, Japan

1—STEVE WILLIAMS
(C) 265, Norman, OK

2—SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(1) 287, Gisu, Japan

3—MITSUHARU MISAWA
(2) 247, Saitama, Japan

4—BIG VAN VADER
(3) 450, Denver, CO

5—NOBUHIKO TAKADA
(4) 231, Yokohama, Japan

6—KONNAN
(6) 237, Mexico City, Mexico

7—KENTA KOBASHI
(7) 261, Tokyo, Japan

8—CHRIS BENOIT
(8) 218, Edmonton, Alberta

9—STAN HANSEN
(9) 322, Borger, TX

10—PERRO AGUAYO
(10) 215, Zacatecas, Mexico

For period ended November 9, 1994

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—BRET HART .... 93 points
2—RIC FLAIR .... 67 points
3—RAZOR RAMON .... 47 points
4—HULK HOGAN .... 47 points
5—STING .... 46 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE NASTY BOYS .... 84 points
2—THE HEADSHRINKERS .... 49 points
3—PAUL ORNDORFF & PAUL ROMA .... 44 points
4—MARCUS BAGWELL & THE PATRIOT .... 37 points
5—THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS .... 36 points

AAA: AAA Champion—Konnan; 1—El Hijo Del Santo; 2—Octagon; 3—The Love Machine; 4—Eddy Guerrero; 5—Rey Mysterio Jr.; 6—La Parka; 7—Perro Aguayo; 8—Blue Panther; 9—Psicosis; 10—Cien Caras.

ACW: ACW Champion—T. Rantula; 1—Hacksaw Duggan; 2—Tito Santana; 3—Rick Martel; 4—Mr. Hughes; 5—Johnny Gunn; 6—Glenn Osbourne; 7—Max Thrasher; 8—Lord Zoltan; 9—Johnny Graham; 10—Scotty Flamingo.

IWCCW: IWCCW Champion—Tito Santana; 1—Greg Valentine; 2—Tony Atlas; 3—Jimmy Snuka; 4—Rick Martel; 5—The Funny Clown; 6—Metal Maniac; 7—Jim Powers; 8—Cousin Luke; 9—Gino Caruso; 10—Hacksaw Duggan.

MTW: MTW Champion—Machine Gun Kelly; 1—Johnny Paradise; 2—Chris Carter; 3—Rock Stevens; 4—Al Snow; 5—Bobo Brazil Jr.; 6—J.T. Lightning; 7—Scott Summers; 8—Denny Kass; 9—Mohammed Saad; 10—Bastion Booger.

PWA: PWA Champion—The Hater; 1—Tommy Ferrara; 2—Punisher; 3—Randy Gusto; 4—J.B. Trask; 5—Storm Trooper Aaron; 6—Hawk; 7—Charlie Norris; 8—Jerry Lynn; 9—Blake Beverly; 10—Storm Trooper Willie.

PWF: PWF Champion—Italian Stallion; 1—Russian Assassin II; 2—Southern Rocker; 3—Flaming Youth; 4—Star Ryder; 5—Masked Maniac; 6—Cruel Connection II; 7—Troy Conyers; 8—Brian Williams; 9—Gladiator II; 10—Terry Austin.

WWA: WWA Champion—Friendly Frank; 1—Abudah Singh; 2—Abdullah the Butcher; 3—Rick Conners; 4—Ramblin' Rich; 5—Duane Gill; 6—Striker; 7—Ed Atlas; 8—Ray Odyssey; 9—Gus the Greek; 10—Boy Gone Bad.

WWWA: WWWA Champion—Brutus Beefcake; 1—Jack Hammer; 2—Rick Martel; 3—Harley Lewis; 4—S.D. Jones; 5—The Zombie; 6—Glenn Osbourne; 7—Mad Russian; 8—Johnny Rebel; 9—Super Nova; 10—Mr. Haiti.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

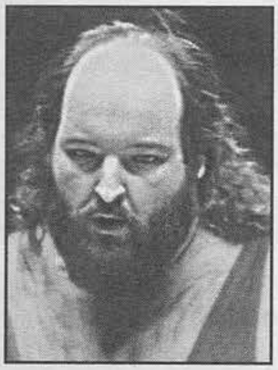
Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 20 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans

Where are the WWF tag champs? As you can see on page 64, WWF World tag team champions **Diesel** and **Shawn Michaels** are not ranked at all in the tag team ratings. Before you bombard our offices with letters, let us explain.

At press time, Michaels was sidelined with a broken right hand. He broke his hand during a match in mid-October, and hadn't wrestled since. Therefore, if Michaels and Diesel were not defending their belts, it wouldn't be fair to rate them above teams that are either holding or contending for titles.

Injuries have forced world champions out of the ratings before. Back in 1989, **Ric Flair** was sidelined with a neck injury after he was attacked by **Terry Funk**. Flair was regarded as the number-one wrestler in the world when the injury occurred, but he dropped out of the Top 10 until he returned to action.

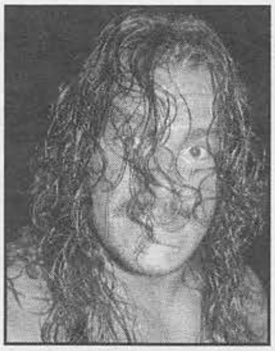
WWF President **Jack Tunney** hasn't made any comment about whether he is thinking about stripping Diesel and Michaels. That could happen if they do not defend their championship at all within a 30-day period, but remember that **Hulk Hogan** went 70 days without defending the WWF World title in 1993 ... and he wasn't even injured.


Avalanche

Even if they are not stripped of the belts, they might find it hard to hold on to them once Michaels' hand heals. The "Heartbreak Kid" could be rusty, and **The Headshrinkers**, **The Smokin' Gunns**, **The Heavenly Bodies**, and **The Bushwhackers** are all gunning for those belts.

It's like the WWF all over again! What exactly is going on WCW? First **Hulk Hogan** arrives, then **The Honky Tonk Man**, **Meng** (formerly **King Haku**), **Brutus Beefcake** (who wants to be known as **"The Butcher"**), **Avalanche** (formerly **Earthquake**) and **Hacksaw Duggan** follow close behind. It's like the old WWF—of about 1987—revisited! Never in our wildest dreams would we think that WCW would look like a carbon copy of the WWF a few years ago. Fans are hoping the hot action in WCW won't diminish with the addition of a few ex-WWF grapplers.

What do you think? Is WCW adding too many WWF alumni?


Sabu

Some people say WCW had a lot of great young stars who were only getting better, but is now showing favoritism to Duggan, Honky Tonk, and the others.

Independents on the rise! There is great independent action all over the place. Extreme Championship Wrestling is one of the hottest promotions around and Smoky Mountain Wrestling and the USWA also boast good talent rosters.

Fans who attend independent cards often get to see up-and-coming stars honing their craft. More independent wrestlers are getting national recognition.

For example, **Tony Anthony** and **Sabu**, who wrestle for SMW and ECW, respectively, have both climbed into the Top 10 at one point or another in 1994. So did **Sid Vicious**, the current USWA champ. In fact, Anthony, Sabu, *and* Vicious were all rated in the Top 10 in the Winter 1994 issue of THE WRESTLER. It's not that the two main federations don't have a lot of talent, it's just that these wrestlers are that good.

The maturation of the "Bad Guy." **Razor Ramon** used to be one of those wrestlers who never lived up to his potential. Now, with the capturing of his second WWF Intercontinental title, Ramon has buried all of his critics and developed into one of the most well-rounded wrestlers in the world today. His ladder match at WrestleMania X with **Shawn Michaels** was a classic, and he thoroughly dominated **Diesel** on his way to winning back the I-C belt.

He continues to dominate his competition (**Owen Hart** and **Jeff Jarrett** have both lost to him numerous times during the last few months), and it's nice to see an athlete do what we knew he could do all along. Maybe we'll be saying the same about **Lex Luger** around this time next year ...

That's about it! What are your thoughts on Diesel and Michaels? Should they be stripped of the straps? We'd love to find out your opinion on this issue and anything else concerning our ratings. Drop us a line at: "Ratings Analysis," c/o THE WRESTLER, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

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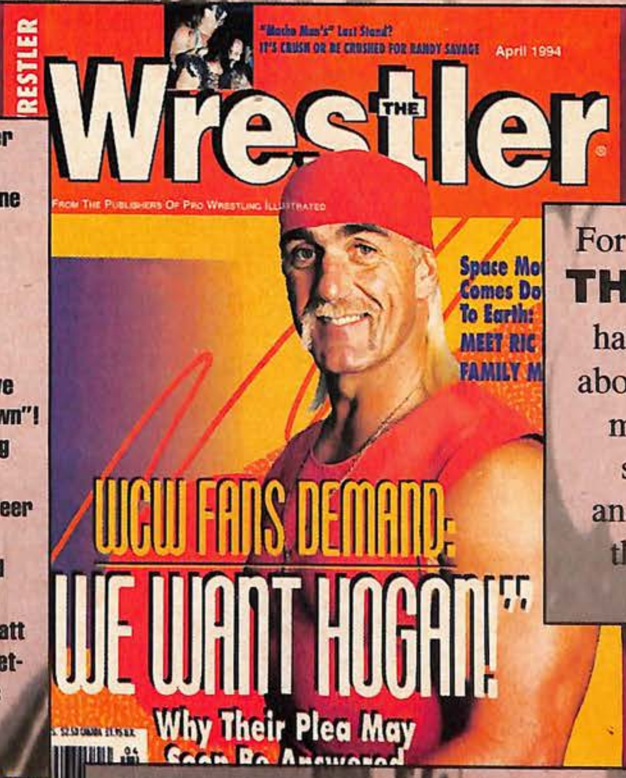

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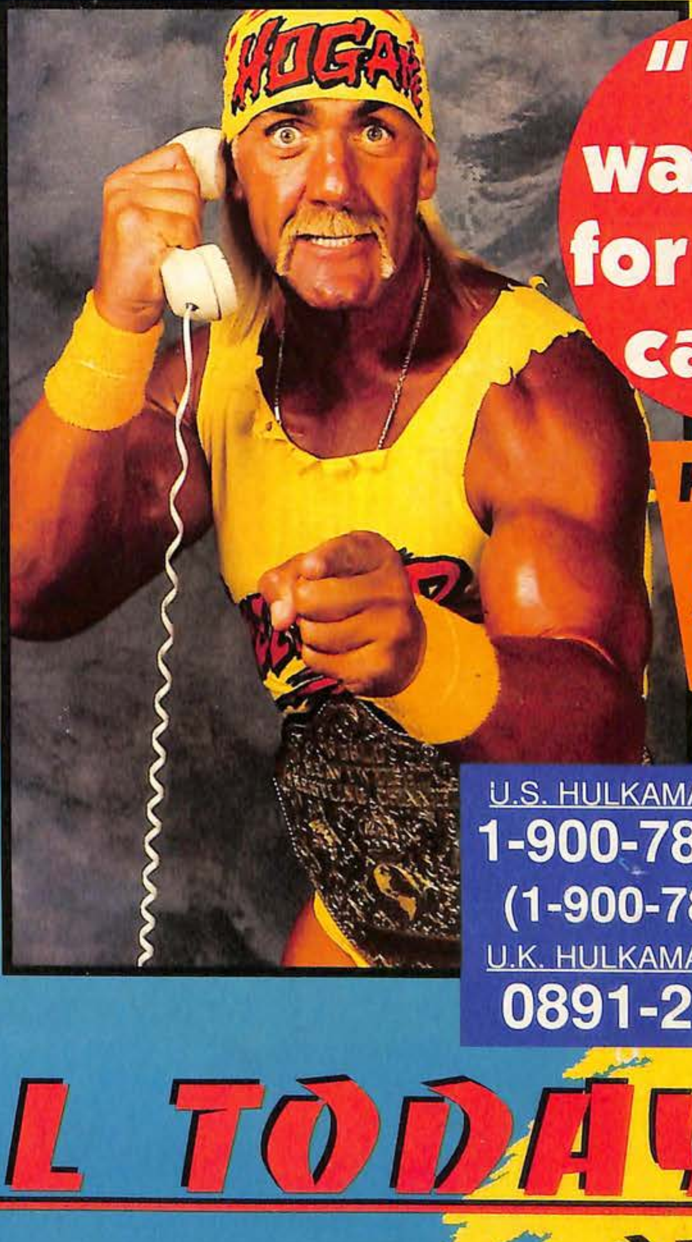

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